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RANADE

THE PROPHET OF LIBERATED INDIA



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JUSTICE MAHADEV GOVIND RANADE

RANADE

THE PROPHET OF LIBERATED INDIA

“ With a liberated manhood, with buoyant hope, with a faith that never shirks duty, with a sense of justice that deals fairly to all, with unclouded intellect and powers fully cultivated, and lastly, with a love that overleaps all bounds, renovated India will take her proper rank among the nations of the world and be the master of the situation and of her own destiny. This is the goal to be reached—this is the promised land. Happy are they who see it in distant vision, happier those who are permitted to work and clear the way on to it, happiest they who live to see it with their own eyes and tread upon the holy soil once more.”

(*Ranade : Inaugural Address at the 10th Social Conference, Calcutta.—1896.*)

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- E.—Essays in Indian Economics by M. G. Ranade
(Publishers-G. A. Natesan & Co. Third Edition.)
- M.—Miscellaneous Writings of Mr. Justice Ranade. (1915)
- R.—Rise of the Maratha Power by M. G. Ranade. (1900)
- G.—Speeches of Gopal Krishna Gokhale
(Publishers G. A. Natesan & Co. Third Edition)
- J.—Writings and Speeches of Hon'ble G. V. Joshi. (1912)

PREFACE

By the judgment of friends and opponents alike, Ranade has been recognised as a great man, a fervent patriot, a religious reformer, a leader of thought, a guide of men, an able historian and an eminent economist. In view of this comprehensive service of Ranade to his motherland and to humanity at large, and the wide and sincere appreciation that it has evoked, it is regrettable that literature describing his manifold services is so very limited. Such literature usually falls into three important categories. The first consists of intimate biographies of a more or less personal and private nature. Many people have a keen interest in knowing this private, and in one sense more human, side of the lives of great men. In Ranade's case this want has been satisfied for the Marathi reader by the eloquent reminiscences of her revered husband that have been written by the late Mrs. Ramabai Ranade. This book is rich in its expressed as well as its silent warmth of admiration, affection and loyalty.

There is no independent English work on Ranade's life which can be put in this class of personal biographies. As early as 1902, the late Rao Bahadur G. A. Mankar, who had many opportunities of coming into personal contact with Mr. Ranade, produced an English biography of Mr. Ranade in two parts. Though the book was intended to be both a descriptive and critical account of Mr. Ranade's career, its value now consists mostly in its personal narrative. Many years later (1926) Mr. James Kellock of the Wilson College, Bombay, produced a volume on Ranade, in the Builders of Modern India Series, in which most of the material in Mrs. Ranade's book and other published sources has been utilised. Now, with the lapse of nearly two generations since the death of Ranade, it is futile to expect a personal biography of the great man written by an author claiming long and continued contact with him.

Of more public and lasting importance are the biographical works that aim at an accurate specification and scientific

description of the position held by their hero in the field or fields in which he worked. Ranade was so much engrossed in all the sides of national life in India and has produced so very lasting effect on all of them, that his life story is almost identical with the history of the progressive movements in India during the latter half of the nineteenth century. This period was one of gradual assimilation of the new political, economic, social and intellectual forces set in motion by the British conquest. As Ranade himself had discovered, the third quarter of the century witnessed the destructive and repressive results of the new forces. It was only during the last quarter that the contrary movement was set in motion. In the diagnosis of the inwardness of the evil, in the criticism of the baneful features of the new forces at work, in the forecasting of the new change and in actively initiating and hastening the advent of the revival, no single man, except perhaps Raja Ram Mohan Roy, has played so important a role as Ranade. To write an account of the public activities of Ranade is to attempt an exhaustive survey of the genesis and early stages of the movement of Indian reformation. This movement extended to political, economic, social and religious fields, in all of which Ranade attained and kept the place of the foremost leader. Ranade's achievements in these fields constitute an important landmark in the history of the Indian national movement.

The fullest possible account of Ranade's share in these fateful events needs to be accurately described. None who is devoid of some firsthand information about the great events of Ranade's days and of considerable political acumen and experience is fitted to accomplish this task. The fittest man to write such an account of Ranade's career was his avowed disciple Mr. Gokhale. In writing about the public activities of Ranade Gokhale would have rendered a national service and would have partially discharged a debt of gratitude. Mr. Gokhale often entertained a plan for such a work. But either because he felt that the time was not ripe for assessing, or even dispassionately describing the public career of Ranade, or because he was prematurely taken away from a life which was full of pressing pre-occupations of public life this plan was never put into effect. What Gokhale left undone there are

few qualified to attempt. Fortunately for the country and for the memory of Ranade there are still amongst us one or two publicists, who by their contact with Ranade, by their experience of public life and by their attainments as scholars and writers, are richly fitted to undertake the task of producing an appropriate and significant account of Ranade's services to the Indian nation. It is very fortunate that for the Marathi reader the need for such a biography has been partly met by a competent survey of Ranade's career by Mr. N. R. Phatak of Bombay.

In a different, and humbler, class must be put a type of biographical literature which aims chiefly at understanding and recording those features of the plans and methods of work followed by the departed great, which are of permanent importance and utility in guiding the actions of later generations. A knowledge of the personality and public career of the leader is, no doubt, a valuable and almost indispensable equipment of the writer who would set out to accomplish even this modest end. But of greater importance are familiarity with the written and spoken word of the man, regard for his ideals and methods and loyalty to his intellectual and moral leadership. The present writer does not claim to possess all these qualifications in as great a measure as would be ideally desirable. He has, however, entertained for a large number of years a feeling of the greatest veneration for Ranade's work and has taken some pains to equip himself for an understanding of the plan and methods of national work which Ranade favoured. It is his earnest conviction that under changed circumstances and perhaps in altered forms the principles and maxims enunciated by Ranade are valid to the present day and bid fair to remain so for a very long time in the future.

For this reason an attempt has been made in the present work to outline what appear to the author to be the leading principles of Ranade in the several fields of social, economic, and political activities in which he took part. The main account is given as a connected narration in the author's own words. But at every important step Ranade's own words are reproduced, in foot-notes, so that their eloquence and authen-

ticity might not suffer at the less adept hands of the interpreter. It is the fervent hope of the author that all young workers into whose hands this work might fall will derive from its perusal a correct appreciation of the views of Ranade on several vital issues that confront an awakened and dutiful mind. If only Ranade's views are given a just and dispassionate reception, it is the firm belief of the author that they will command the staunch support of all persons for whom life is neither a pleasure parade nor a funeral march, but a sober course of duty—duty to yourself, duty to your country and duty to humanity in general.

The author has received very valuable assistance from a large number of friends for the publication of this book. To all these and, in particular, to Prof. R. K. Khandekar, who went through the manuscript, to Prof. N. R. Deshpande, who helped in proof correction and to Prof. R. D. Vadekar who prepared the index, the author is very deeply indebted. To the Servants of India Society the author owes a very special debt of gratitude as without their wholehearted assistance it would hardly have been possible to produce the book.

Ranade : The Story of His Life

That this youthful Ranade of my early collegiate days should have blossomed and ripened into the great Ranade as the world of India knew him is no surprise. The stars, in their course, had cast his literary horoscope and destined him to be a profound scholar of varied attainments, sobriety of thought, and true literary culture. The muses would have claimed him as their own, in any clime and in any age.

—*D. E. Watcha*

During his life time Ranade was approached more than once by persons intending to write a biography of his life and career. He discouraged all these attempts and only the briefest possible accounts of the incidents of his birth, education and career were allowed to be published. This was due no doubt in a large measure to the well-known modesty of the great man. But a more important cause for Ranade's unwillingness to encourage a voluminous biography of his personal life is to be found in his insistence on concentrating greater thought on the movement of things than on the doings of individuals. To those who sought to write his life his advice was to write about the times and their problems. Obviously, he was more eager to have the problems of his times studied in relation to the solutions offered by him than to broadcast the incidents of his career. But the reactions of his own mind to the several problems of his day were inevitably conditioned by the environmental influences moulding his own life. A full understanding of his views in proper perspective cannot be gained except by an appreciation of the viewpoints that Ranade was led to adopt by the circumstances of his career. An objective background of his own life, though as a brief outline, will serve a useful purpose as an introduction to the study of his teachings.

The Ranade family belonged to the Chiplun taluka of the coastal district of Ratnagiri. Here the ancestors of Ranade

lived a life commonly associated with the land-lord-cum-priestly class. A more or less traditional possession of the ancient Vedic lore is coupled with the more worldly art of agricultural management. At the best of times agriculture in the Konkan is far from lucrative and the pressure of population has ever acted as an encouragement to emigration. When the expanding opportunities of professional and administrative employment offered by the widening scope of Maratha power became known in the Konkan the emigrations to the Desh became a normal opening for adventurous careers. It is recorded that the great great-grand-father of Ranade, Bhagwant Rao, came with his family to the Sholapur District and settled in a village near Pandharpur called Karkamb. Bhagwant Rao himself seems to have led an uneventful life of devotion. But his son, Bhaskar Rao, the great grand-father of Ranade, attracted the notice of the Patwardhan chiefs whose territories surrounded the holy land of Pandharpur.

Bhaskar Rao was a man of great energy and versatile ability. He served the Patwardhans of Sangli both in civilian and military capacities and later on represented his master at the court of the Company's administration in the Deccan. Bhaskar Rao's son, Amrit Rao, the grand-father of Ranade, was employed in the British service and rose to be a Mamlatdar. Govind Rao, Ranade's father commenced his career as subordinate in the revenue and executive service of the government. He was soon marked out as a very capable administrator and on the recommendation of his superior officer was offered a post in the Kolhapur state, which was then administered by a regency. Govind Rao was well versed in Sanskrit lore, besides being an upright and respected officer. It was during his days of service in the revenue department of the British government that Govind Rao was posted at Niphad, in Nasik District, as Phadnavis, or head clerk to the Mamlatdar. It was here that Ranade was born on Tuesday, 18th January 1842. While it cannot be claimed that the Ranade family had played any striking part in the history of the country, or that any of them before Ranade had attained greatness, it is obvious that religious fervour, love of learning and political and administrative talents were inherited by Ranade in no meagre measure. Except that

she was a very pious lady and affectionate mother little is known about Gopikabai, the mother of Ranade, who was christened Mahadev and was later known to the world as Justice Mahadev Govind Ranade.

It is so difficult after the lapse of a century to visualise the state of things at the time of Ranade's birth that even a rough indication of the situation here and abroad will not be without interest. In 1842, Queen Victoria had been only five years on the throne of England. While the course of English industrialisation was gathering strength, the policy of free trade had yet to be adopted by that country. The new era of colonial self-government was just being introduced in Canada. On the continent of Europe the first feelings of confidence in British theories of freedom of intercourse were being counteracted by two forces, one of nationalism and the other of socialism. The legitimacy of dynastic sovereigns as also of customary property was seriously challenged. In place of Liberalism as an absolute principle the doctrines of evolutionary growth were gaining strength. The scientific books of Darwin were working a veritable revolution in human thought. It is well-known that the year 1848 witnessed a premature and disorganised explosion of the new forces generated by political, intellectual and economic transformation. The failure of the revolutions of 1848 marked the beginning of a new era in which a more sweeping challenge to all existing institutions was offered than was possible at any time after the French Revolution.

Thus in Europe the period in which the birth of Ranade took place was definitely marked by a searching examination of the complacent claims of British liberalism, which only too often was contradicted by British practice. Nationalism and social justice were recognised to be principles of greater validity than the freedom of action possessed by the individual. Against such a background a wideawake mind such as that of Ranade could not but be struck by the new light, which incidentally revealed only too clearly the conditions in India as they developed with Ranade's growing age. The year of Ranade's birth coincided with the attempts made by Lord Ellenborough to wipe off the disgrace of the disastrous Afgan campaign. While the fall of the Maratha empire was by then complete the

forces of the confederate Maratha chiefs were still a power to be counted with. The Sikhs were yet to be reduced and had a position of independence only conditioned by their treaty of alliance with the British. All the frontier districts, Nepal, Assam and Burma had been conquered leaving the district of Upper Burma still in tact. Even distant Singapore had been captured. It will thus be seen that when Ranade was born the conquest of India by the British though considerably advanced was by no means complete. The Sikh Wars, the annexation of Sindh, the ravages of the Doctrine of Lapse and the great 'Mutiny' of the year 1857 were events yet in the offing. By the time Ranade finished his childhood the political map of present-day British India was almost finally fixed. But many of the latest operations were undoubtedly fresh in Ranade's memory either of personal experience or of tradition passed on to him by persons who had actually taken part in or were witnesses of great events.

The political transformation of India, with its attendant social, intellectual and economic results, of which Ranade spoke was thus a matter of vivid personal experience to him. While the European countries were passing through a stage of national consolidation and social reconstruction a process of disintegration affecting almost all aspects of life was taking place in India. It was the historical role of Ranade, and of his generation, to interpret to their less educated and less gifted countrymen the inner meaning and implications of the new order—or rather in all but the purely administrative fields, the new disorder. As the stage of consolidation and reconstruction in England had commenced much earlier than that in the continental countries it was only natural that Ranade should observe all the lands: India, England, and other advanced and backward countries. Guided by the best results of his observation Ranade diagnosed the diseased condition of his mother country and prescribed remedies for its cure. The birth of the German and Italian nations as also the gradual rise of America and Japan to economic strength were events taking place before Ranade's own eyes. Contrasting this record of constructive progress with the apathy and decay in India it would have been a miracle of purblind pedantry had Ranade failed to draw the obvious moral.

Nature had endowed Ranade with too many good talents and had handicapped him with too few of the usual weaknesses of humanity for him to miss his mission. This objective description of his talents is not intended to belittle the supreme value of the powers of self-discipline and high moral purpose which Ranade possessed. But many a man who later on attained greatness had often to overcome the obstacles of his own earlier lapses. In Ranade's case, from his very childhood, he exhibited a combination of qualities which would have raised him to eminence in almost any walk of life. It is said that he was neither precocious nor flashy like some of his contemporaries at school. But his understanding and judgment were unimpaired. To these qualities were added a highly retentive memory and a love of knowledge which taxed throughout his life all his physical resources. Such ardent and painstaking natures occasionally lose by comparison with the more showy qualities of childhood. Hence in the earlier stages of his instruction, though Ranade passed all tests with credit, he did not by any means attract outstanding notice.

Some of the high moral and emotional qualities that Ranade evinced throughout his career were clearly discerned in his childhood and in fact gave him an illdeserved reputation for awkwardness bordering on stupidity. He carried the regularity of his habits almost to a ridiculous limit. Introspection and simplicity which were two of the highest qualities that Ranade possessed were regarded by his parents and elderly relatives only as strange perversions. Ranade refused to wear ornaments, as was common in well-to-do families in his day, on the ground that he did not like them and that the children of the poor people did not possess them. His love of fair play was carried to the extreme point. Playing a game of chess by himself, with a pillar as an imaginary opponent, Ranade had the awkwardness to lose the game but the fairness to give to the pillar what was due to the pillar. If we add to these somewhat unusual traits the general sobriety of his behaviour and deportment we shall have an idea as to the strange and conflicting feelings that Ranade must have provoked among those

who watched him through his childhood. Though by no means precocious Ranade appeared physically and intellectually an overgrown child even to his parents.

Almost the whole of his early education took place at Kolhapur where his father had come to occupy a responsible post under the regency administration. Facilities for vernacular and especially English education were then most meagre. In fact they were being just organised on a regular footing. It is indicative of the stage of national evolution of which Ranade was a part that almost from the primary school to the highest examination of the University he was a member of the very first, or at most one of the earliest, batch of students who took advantage of these. What was lacking in the shape of imposing buildings, voluminous equipment and extensive libraries was made up by the enthusiasm and devotion of the teachers. Ranade himself spoke in terms of grateful appreciation of his teachers. The foundations of his knowledge especially of the English language were well laid by the instruction that he received in the Kolhapur school. By the end of the year 1856 Ranade had exhausted all the opportunities for instruction then available in Kolhapur. After some natural hesitation on the part of relations Ranade, with a close friend and class fellow belonging to the Kirtane family, who had most intimate relations with the Ranades, was sent to Bombay for further instruction.

Most of the journey to Bombay had to be accomplished in country carts and a separate establishment had to be maintained for the convenience and comfort of the young scholars in the big city. Ranade and his friend joined the Elphinstone Institution which had yet to develop into a College. Ranade's advent to Bombay preceded the Indian Mutiny by a few months and he was thus fairly competent to know and appreciate the events that followed during the next few years. Before the passing of the Government of India Act, 1858, which transferred the authority of the Company to the British Crown, there was no genuine administration or public life in India. When the Charter of the East India Company was finally abolished in 1853 an association was formed in the Deccan for the purpose of agitating for a suitable modification of the system

of government. But no steady current of political activity could then have set in. It is possible that when Ranade came to Bombay he was only an ardent seeker after new knowledge; but what he witnessed in Bombay during his sojourn indicated to him his mission of national regeneration. A new order was definitely unfolding itself and Ranade in his person was to be its first interpreter to his countrymen whom he was destined to guide through the coming trial. While Ranade had studied with benefit under several teachers and while he entertained a feeling of natural respect for his father it does not seem that any of these had a share in building up his spiritual life, the most important part of his mental makeup. It is probable that his mother who was an extremely pious lady, and who while doting on her only son doubted his capacity to make a decent living, had influenced his emotional life in the right direction. The mother, however, died in 1853 and all the emotional and moral succour that Ranade needed had to be gathered from within. This is true in spite of the fact that while he was only a child of twelve he was married to an even younger girl who was well connected, being in fact a sister-in-law of the then ruling chief of Ichalkaranji, a small principality in the Deccan. A strong character, a balanced emotional life and a keen intellectual acumen were built up before Ranade set foot in Bombay. It is not surprising under the circumstances that his less advanced friends should have discovered in him what the late Sir Dinsha Wacha called the '*veritable enfant terrible* of literature.'

THE NEW LEARNING

Ranade was no more than a lad of fifteen when he first came to Bombay. The ten years of continuous, intensive and all sided study that he spent there made him an accomplished scholar, a perfect gentleman and an ornament and a guide to his country. A good deal is known about the manner in which Ranade spent this period of preparation for his appointed mission. The first Matriculation Examination of the Bombay University, which was established in 1858, was held in 1859. Ranade who was already studying in the collegiate classes appeared at this examination along with a score of

other candidates, of whom seven came from Poona and the rest belonged to Bombay. Needless to say, Ranade gave a very good account of himself at this examination and won a junior fellowship at college. Throughout his stay at college Ranade continued to enjoy the highest awards of fellowships and prizes. The natural enthusiasm of Ranade and his co-students for the New Learning received a great impetus from the appointment of Sir Alexander Grant to the staff of the Elphinstone College. The influence that Sir Alexander exercised over Ranade and his colleagues may be judged from the following remark of Sir D. E. Watcha.

“ He (Ranade) seemed to have been literally cast in the Hellenic mould; and there is, to my mind, no doubt that the great Hellenic scholar of world-wide fame, no other than Sir Alexander Grant, who was the principal of the College and professor of History and Philosophy, had vastly influenced his scholastic career. In Mr. Ranade there was all through a Socratic spirit of humility and a Socratic bent of mind which always argued in the well-known method of that great Hellenic philosopher. ”✓

In 1861 Ranade passed the First B. A., or the Little-go examination with the usual first class distinction. Henceforth Ranade became a Senior scholar and was also entrusted with tutorial work. The junior students, with whom it was Ranade's lot to work as tutor, and for many years later as a lecturer and professor, were duly impressed by his learning and earnestness. But it is not surprising to learn that the average student found the teaching much too heavy for him, and failed to rise even to the minimum standard of effort that Ranade expected of him. Ranade spared no pains to equip himself well for any new subject that he might be called upon to teach. His own capacity for work and acquisition of knowledge left the hearers in no doubt about his exalted scholarship. Many of his students of those days have recorded their impressions in which they seem to have discerned even then unmistakable signs of the great future which awaited Ranade. Ranade himself was occasionally disappointed with the lack of industry and preference for short cuts to success evinced by students. It is, however, amply

proved that teachers, friends, colleagues and students unanimously bore testimony to his sincerity of purpose and to the high level of his scholarship.

As Ranade began to advance from class to class his capacity for work began to increase till it reached a stage at which he did not lose even a minute of his time in other than essential duties. It is recorded by a contemporary that even in the interval between examinations Ranade continued to read. Not content with the compulsory subjects prescribed for the course Ranade assiduously attended such voluntary lectures as those on Butler's sermons, and distinguished himself extraordinarily well in the final test, having induced the examiner actually to award more marks than the maximum set for the answers. Having studied well for all his tests Ranade passed his B. A. examination in the first class in 1862, and also secured success at the special examination for an Honours degree in History and Economics. Ranade had the privilege of securing his degree at the very first convocation of the Bombay University at the hands of Sir Bartle Frere the then Chancellor. Ranade had offered Marathi as his special language, though he had taken special pains to study Sanskrit privately. Ranade's distinguished success at all the examinations weighed with his friends in the University in securing for him an appointment as examiner in Marathi in the very year in which he passed his B. A. examination.

Though Ranade was endowed with an exceptionally strong and imposing, though by no means a prepossessing physique he taxed his strength, and especially overstrained his eyes, in an effort to equip himself as well as humanly possible for the great task that awaited him. In a course of life otherwise very well regulated Ranade ever suffered from an unwillingness to preserve his strength so that it might give him longer service. This indeed was due to his eagerness not to spare himself, and as in all cases of doubt he overstrained himself rather than leave a thing unfinished he brought on himself a premature weakening. The acute eye trouble from which he suffered during 1863 was only a foretaste of an experience that dogged him throughout life. While Ranade was studying for his M. A. examination he was given the responsible work of coaching undergraduate students in Economics. Some time

Ranade had to teach a variety of literary and scientific subjects. But history and economics were always his favourite subjects. It is, therefore, not surprising to learn that while teaching Economics from Mill's Principles of Political Economy, which then was a popular text, Ranade went through almost the entire literature then available on the subject in English. This habit of an exhaustive reference to the whole literature on a subject, in which he may happen to be interested, was acquired by him early in his career as a student and it remained with him throughout his life. An essay on the population of India advocating prudential checks belongs to Ranade's writings at this period of his life.

In 1864 Ranade passed the M. A. examination and as a special mark of appreciation of his brilliant record in the University he was appointed a Fellow of the University, being the first of the University's own graduates to receive such an appointment. At the next Convocation the Chancellor, who still was Sir Bartle Frere at whose hands Ranade had received his graduate's and master's degrees, spoke of him as follows.

"To Mr. Mahadev Govind Ranade I would offer an especial welcome as the first of what I trust will be a long and distinguished roll of Fellows. The first of our graduates, who has attained the honours of a Master of Arts, he has well earned the distinction of being the first indigenous Fellow of this University:"

Having set his heart on a legal career Ranade had continued to study law. He passed his LL. B. examination with first class honours in 1866. Wishing to complete his legal education by appearing at the highest, i. e. the advocate's examination Ranade registered himself for the course and began to attend the courts for training. He, however, was offered and he accepted the appointment of assistant Oriental Translator in 1866. The legal studies thus disturbed were not completed till 1871. But in accepting his first regular job in government service it must be said that he voluntarily brought to an end his period of long and intensive training for life that had started in 1857. During this period Ranade was never noticed for either social or sporting qualities. From the limited experi-

ence of his interests in these fields it is clear that Ranade did not lack the innate capacity necessary for either a social or a sporting success. Nor was he unmindful of their importance in a balanced scheme of life. But he had so intently set his heart on an intellectual equipment for the fulfilment of his life's work that he deliberately weaned himself away from the more attractive avenues of the life of undergraduates at a University,

Ranade's capacity and effort at deliberate self-discipline were witnessed in another and more important sphere. Such of the school and college essays of Ranade as are now available are positive proofs of his wide study and originality of thought. Even in respect of a balanced judgment and fairness and adequacy of exposition they will compare remarkably well with similar products from other able students. The temptations, that confront a young student in the way of generalising from limited observation, or of indulging in a flourish of language at the cost of perfect relevance or correctness were not altogether avoided by Ranade. In his matriculation examination and later on at college he is known to have incurred the displeasure of his teachers by indulging in uncomplimentary references to the British regime in India. This treatment meted out to Ranade's writings may be explained as an act of political prejudice. But even apart from these well-known incidents there is reason to believe that the earlier efforts at criticism, literary or political, that Ranade had made occasionally evinced the natural wildness of undergraduate utterances. With greater experience and reading Ranade learned the justice and the need of greater fairness and balance. The process of self-discipline that he must have gone through to attain this conviction stood him in good stead throughout later life. Even under the most trying and emergent circumstances Ranade was seen to preserve his balance of judgment and sense of fairness. These Olympic heights of calm wisdom were not reached without a corresponding effort of will. -

To secure a full and reliable knowledge of his subject Ranade cultivated the habit of carefully summarising all the important material that he read. Though laborious this was a sure and dependable way to that comprehensive and accurate knowledge of his subject that Ranade evinced on all occasions,

He never spoke or wrote without previous preparation. Such a rule of conduct must have been exceptionally onerous on one who never turned back from a reasonable opportunity for self-expression. Such demands on Ranade's effort were many in number. He was a great favourite with his teachers and other educational authorities who not only encouraged Ranade to write on a variety of subjects, but even used his writings as a proof of the beneficent effect produced by the new education on the mind of young Indians. But the appeal that counted most with Ranade was the one emanating from public sources in the shape of debating societies, reform clubs and periodicals. If the years for which we are speaking are reviewed in memory, it will be seen that the period of Ranade's growing maturity was the era of political and economic consolidation of the early British regime. Railways were connecting the whole land into one economic, social and administrative unit. Nothing like the regular and well organised civil and military rule of the Crown was known before. The impression produced was too stunning to rouse a sense of political membership on equal terms. People flocked to the institutions of new knowledge partly to know the nature of the system of thought and action of their conquerors and new rulers, and partly to qualify themselves for an administrative or a professional career. A sense of defeatism had pressed down the larger portion of the community into self-abasement, leaving a few either to examine their social system with a view to reformation or to make an attempt at imitating the ways of their rulers. Discussions, and especially discussions about the relative merits of English and indigenous ways, were then in the air.

Ranade was too earnest a soul not to be drawn into this veritable hail-storm of debate. He belonged to a few of these newly started associations and took an interest in the working of almost all of them. His well-advertised capacity as an essayist brought to his doors the opportunity to express himself through the English columns of the *Indu Prakash*, an Anglo-Marathi daily started in Bombay in 1862. The English side was almost entirely dependent on Ranade for the editorials from the beginning of the paper's career till Ranade left Bombay on official service. Ranade threw himself with his usual enthusiasm

in the discharge of his editorial duties and he is said to have produced some very striking articles on historical, administrative and financial topics. Ranade's emotional interest warmed by a strong sense of social justice seems to have been roused at a very early stage of his public career by the cause of widow remarriage. It is not a mere coincidence that the first and the last acts of his conscious public service were connected with widow remarriage. Even in his student days he took an active interest in the efforts being made by certain reformers in Bombay to popularise the remarriages of widows and to lift the legal ban on such marriages among the high class Hindus. As will be noted at an appropriate place only a few minutes before his sudden death Ranade was engaged in arranging for a remarriage of a widowed girl belonging to an orthodox gujarathi community.

When Ranade entered upon his career as a government servant his intellectual, no less than moral and emotional interests were thus firmly settled. He was for knowing everything and for doing everything to secure in his mother country justice and progress for all. A brief reference may at this stage be made to a question that is naturally provoked in the mind of a present-day reader on learning that such a devout patriot and more than whole-hearted servant of his countrymen entered the paid service of Government instead of remaining in an independent business such as that of a lawyer. In such matters no explanation can be found to be fully satisfactory to all shades of critics and doubters. It might, however, be mentioned that the stage of the country's history at which Ranade's lot was cast was one of unmitigated disorganisation. At this stage educative and reformatory efforts were most urgently needed. To bring about an effective movement of reformatory reconstruction, people's minds had to be approached through a favourable channel. At any rate after the unsuccessful attempt to snatch power from the British in 1857 it was clear that only those who swam with the current could be spared for an opportunity to conserve and develop their strength. On a dispassionate survey of the situation Ranade was convinced that the new regime with all its faults had a definite and on

the whole a beneficent, role to play in the reconstruction and progress of the country. He could see that his utility as a guide would be greater as a responsible member of the new administration than as a non-official. To add to these deliberate conclusions there was the natural preference of Ranade for retirement and working behind the scenes than in the blaze of foot-lights. As Ranade himself said about the career of several great men, it must be remembered that even great men are the creation of their times and for the very success of their beneficent plans they cannot afford to neglect the limitations imposed by the times.

The very first official duty that Ranade was called upon to discharge was one which he had pursued as a favourite study but which had by no means been a major interest in his academic scheme. Marathi literature was a subject of his choice at University examinations and as Marathi Translator he tried to discharge his duties most conscientiously. With the help of his assistants he took pains to acquaint himself with the contents of all the books in Marathi that were being published. In addition to the routine duties of a translator he prepared an annual review on the progress of Marathi literature. Having been deeply read in old Sanskrit as also modern English literature it was not surprising that Ranade should find the output of Marathi authors of his times rather disappointing. He made a pointed reference to this fact without intending to run down the Marathi authors. On the contrary, he spoke in terms of hopefulness of the future prospects of Marathi literature and pointed out what appeared to him to be the desirable lines of progress. While it is possible that opinions may differ as to particular criticisms and suggestions offered by Ranade there can be no doubt whatsoever about the conscientious manner and helpful spirit in which he discharged the somewhat trying duties of his office.

How very trying these duties could occasionally become may be gathered from the fact that Ranade had to discharge the duties even when he was acting as Karbhari or principal administrative officer in Akkalkot, a leading Maratha State of the Deccan, which then was under the administration of the political department. After a few months in this somewhat undefin-

ed office Ranade was persuaded to accept a responsible post in the judicial service of the Kolhapur State, to which place also Ranade carried his duties as the Marathi translator. He was, however, obviously uncomfortable in both these places and when his old principal Sir Alexander Grant retired from service in 1868 Ranade succeeded in obtaining the post of professor of English and History in his old institution. He continued to hold this post off and on till 1871, in which year he was appointed to a permanent post in the judicial service. For two or three years before Ranade secured this appointment he was put into several minor judicial offices for short periods of time. During the intervals of such casual appointments Ranade went back to his post in the Elphinstone College, which he finally relinquished in 1871, much to the regret of his students and colleagues. After this date only once, and that too for a short while, was Ranade called to do the teacher's job in the restricted sense of the term. In 1885 he was appointed to lecture in law at the Deccan College in Poona. As this duty was in addition to the normal judicial employment of Ranade the Accountant General objected to the arrangement which had, therefore, to be discontinued.

IN THE HEART OF MAHARASHTRA

With Ranade's advent to Poona opens a distinctly new epoch in the career both of Ranade and of the chief city of Maharashtra. For twenty-two years from 1871 the history of Poona became the history of Ranade's doings. This is not to suggest that there was no public activity in Poona before Ranade's advent. The ground was prepared for almost all the activities that Ranade later on so ably led. In fact it may be said about Ranade's success as a leader of the multifarious activities in Poona that he was to Poona activities what Sivajee was to the activities of the Maratha race. He did not create these but he so ably co-ordinated them in his own person that it is impossible to think of the two in isolation. Whether we look upon political, religious or social activity it will be found that beginnings in all these spheres had already been made along right lines by earnest men who had not the benefit of the masterly wisdom and competence of

Ranade. Questions like widow remarriage were being seriously debated with human sympathies on one side and textual rigour on the other. Both the opponents and friends of reform were active in support of their own viewpoints. While Ranade was not altogether unconnected with several of these movements, they were undoubtedly spontaneous in origin.

The movement for organising Hinduism as a universal church so as to meet on the one hand the challenge of modern science and rationalism, and on the other the perennial needs of spiritual welfare and social harmony had already been started. The promoters of this movement, the Prarthana Samaj were learned, pious and influential persons who had great regard for Ranade but were able to row their own boats, may be in a less consummate style than under the guidance of the skipper, but safely all the same. Over and above these social and religious stirrings there was the political organisation par excellence the Poona Sarvajanik Sabha. This body which owed its later fame more to Ranade than to anybody else had already been started when Ranade came to Poona. Though it had its birth in an attempt to put the management of the Parvati temple, hereditary religious property of the Peishwas, on a sound footing it was allowed to be continued for the express function of attending to public questions as they arose. Not only ardent public workers like Mr. Joshi, more popularly known as Sarvajanik Kaka, or the people's uncle, but other respectable members of society including some of the Maratha princes were associated with this body. No doubt its influence was limited to comparatively parochial issues but it was a genuine public society which along with its enthusiastic secretary and other workers was ready at hand for the more ambitious and better planned schemes of Ranade.

✓ Ranade signalled his advent to Poona in the capacity of a First Class First Grade Subordinate Judge by delivering lectures on several subjects, especially on commercial and economic topics. These lectures were intended not only to spread information regarding these topics but also to create an enthusiasm for the cause of economic progress. The idea of Swadeshi, of preferring the goods produced in our own country even though they may prove to be dearer

or less satisfactory than finer foreign products, was popularised by him in the course of these lectures. It is recorded that several enthusiastic persons were so touched by these talks that they vowed to wear and use only Swadeshi articles. Mr. G. V. Joshi, who has been referred to earlier as the chief worker of the Sarvajanic Sabha was amongst these. Though the seed thus sown took time to germinate in the shape of constructive effort, the influence exercised by Ranade in the direction of leading the commercial classes to new industrial pursuits and of turning the intellectuals to commercial occupations was felt from the very beginning of his contact with the public life of the country.

During these earlier years of Ranade's work in Poona, two public disasters in the rural parts of the Deccan brought him in close touch with agrarian problems. Incidentally both these events revealed the uncommon qualities of leadership that Ranade possessed. During 1875 extensive civil disorder broke out in the Deccan districts : Poona, Sholapur, Satara and Nagar. Though cases of actual violence and crime were few the terror inspired by these 'riots' was very real. The object of the main body of rioters was to dispossess the money-lenders of the evidences of their claims against the poor peasantry. Other unsocial elements besides the harrassed peasantry also utilised the opportunity for indulging in their nefarious practices. The first duty of the state was of course to restore order and to allow the normal working of the machinery of the law to commence. Throughout this period Ranade supported the forces of law, but he was also careful to point out that the problem in essence was not a magisterial but an economic and a social problem. Unless the system of money-lending was better regulated and organised and until by suitable alterations in the revenue and administrative policies the State helped the agriculturist to get a decent surplus the root causes of discontent would not vanish.

This view of Ranade was not likely to find favour with the authorities but this did not deter him from expressing the same. The next year witnessed a very disastrous famine in most of the Deccan districts. In this case also Ranade through the workers of the Sarvajanic Sabha organised the collection

of reliable information on which Government was requested to act according to the requirements of the famine rules and the declared policies of government based on the same. During the course of this activity the agents of the Sabha occasionally fell foul of the government officials and many anxious situations were constantly threatening to develop. Ranade, however, saw the Sabha—and the afflicted parts of the Deccan—through the anxious period. As soon as the immediate task of relief was accomplished Ranade harked back to the basic question of agrarian reform and revenue settlement. ✓ Much of the work in connection with the Deccan Riots Commission and the subsequent passing of the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act was inspired by Ranade's advocacy of reform. While it cannot be said that the new measure was an unmitigated success it certainly stood for a changed attitude on the part of the State from which much was expected to follow. ✓

While the country at large was racked by the painful consequences of a severe famine, preparations were going on in official circles for a big Darbar at Delhi in honour of the visit of the Prince of Wales. While such things are bound to run a routine course it was not to be expected that people of the afflicted parts could feel any enthusiasm for such festive occasions. Ranade took the opportunity to review the constitutional position of India in the scheme of the empire. A gradual development of parliamentary institutions in India, with the Princes playing their role as a house of peers, was suggested as a natural line of progress. In the meanwhile to keep the Indian questions always before the Imperial Parliament a certain number of Indian representatives were to be elected to that body. Needless to say Government took no notice of these suggestions. But the ideas of the legitimate status of the Indian people so broadcast by Ranade had the desired educative effect, here as also in Great Britain.

The cause of India was then in some evidence at the bar of British opinion. In 1873 a Parliamentary Committee to consider the financial organisation of India was set up. Several public bodies from India sent representatives to give evidence before this Committee. At one time, there was talk of Ranade himself going to England for the purpose, but later on only a

representation was sent on behalf of the Sarvajanik Sabha. But the public forum that most attracted notice towards India was the electioneering campaign that started with the dissolution of Parliament early in 1874 as a result of which Gladstone was superseded by Disraeli as the Prime Minister. The Poona Sarvajanik Sabha is known to have helped Professor Fawcett's candidature in the Liberal interest with money and backing. It is a curious reflection on the then state of public opinion in India and Great Britain that while the supporters of a free economic regime, against which Ranade was later to raise his powerful voice, were aided by informed Indian opinion, Mr. Disraeli, the conservative and imperialist leader, was exhorting his followers to 'leave off mumbling the dry bones of political economy, and munching the remainder biscuit of an effete Liberalism.'

In Indian public life Ranade was in evidence on two widely different fronts of social reform and state politics during the fateful year 1875. Malhar Rao Gaekwar, the then ruling prince of Baroda state, had been charged by the British Government with the very serious offence of an attempt to murder the Resident. The Baroda state as an outpost of Maratha power in the north had always exercised a peculiar fascination for the people of the Maharashtra. The Sarvajanik Sabha of which several princes were members was not likely in the least to sympathise with the criminal intentions that were alleged against the Baroda ruler. But all classes of people in Maharashtra were eager to see that Malhar Rao got a fair trial. They agitated for the same and when it was feared that the British Government would not allow sufficient facilities for the purpose, a huge sum was raised to help in the defence. Eventually Malhar Rao had to abdicate as a punishment for his alleged offence. In Ranade's scheme of thought the princes and their territories were not isolated from the rest of the land. The new regime in India was a common experience to all and methods of national renaissance were to be devised by all classes and interests for a common destiny of freedom and progress,

An unusually unhappy experience lay in store for Ranade over the question of social reform in this very year, 1875. The

famous founder of the Arya Samaj, Swami Dayanand Saraswati, was touring in support of his cause of revitalising Hinduism. Ranade indeed did not altogether see eye to eye with the Swami, but as the latter was a powerful advocate of opposition to narrow orthodoxy Ranade invited him to Poona for a series of lectures. While these lectures were proceeding the storm of intolerant prejudice amongst the orthodox community began to gather strength. To this fund of religious bigotry was added the everpresent desire for a rag which is a well-known characteristic of the unsettled elements in society. On the last day of the Swami's sojourn in Poona a veritable bout of hooliganism broke out from the consequences of which neither the Swami nor Ranade was personally immune. While the incident provoked a feeling of resentment and shame among even the supporters of orthodoxy Ranade, like a Jesus or a Tukaram, put up with all the foul attack in a spirit of philosophical resignation and missionary calm.

While public life, almost in its initial contact with Ranade's personality, was assuming such uncomfortable form the private life of Ranade was also passing through a very tragic phase. It seemed that he was being tried in a very fiery ordeal to prepare him for the more onerous responsibilities that awaited him in future years. In October 1873 Ranade lost his wife after a prolonged and wasting illness through the whole of which he did his best to nurse and to comfort her. Having lost his life's companion whom he had learned to respect and to love for over twenty years Ranade felt like one desolated in all his emotional life. To add to his feelings of sorrow there was the insistent pressure exercised by his father for a second marriage almost on the morrow of the death of his first wife. In December 1873 Ranade at the age of thirty two was married to Ramabai who after being an admirer and helpful companion of her husband throughout his life lived to launch the great Seva Sadan movement. This action on the part of Ranade may appear shocking to some sensitive minds of even later generations. Needless to say the event attracted most unfavourable comment when it took place. The supporters of widow remarriage were wroth because Ranade did not take the opportunity to set an example, and the ortho-

dox party was presented with a debating point making out that Ranade's advocacy of social reform was after all not so sincere as people were led to believe. Even those who knew Ranade most intimately and had a firm faith in his unbounded moral courage were not able to reconcile themselves to this conduct of Ranade. Ranade himself never tried to explain away the act. It appears that weighing his duty to his family and above all to his father and other orthodox relations, and to the cause of the reformist movement by way of setting a personal example, Ranade chose the former. It is open to people to find fault with the judgment of values exhibited by Ranade. The allegation of insincerity or lack of moral courage in its application to Ranade is too gross for serious consideration. His whole life was lived in an unceasing attempt above everything else to be true to himself. It is possible that he himself found the issues too well-balanced and preferred to expiate what little fault there was by silent suffering rather than lead the matter to further controversy.

Ranade undertook an extensive tour of India soon after his second marriage partly to see the different parts and establish personal contacts and partly to regain mental equipoise by change of scene. He seems to have returned with his usual balance well restored. In the very next year (1875) he purchased a house in Poona and became a ratepayer of the city which he loved and which loved and honoured him so well that his European friends described him as the uncrowned king of Poona. Ranade had many intimate associations with friends, but it seems that personal emotion entered more closely in his relations with Rao Bahadur Pandit who was an indefatigable worker in the cause of social reform than in his relations with any one else. This tie was broken in 1876 by the Rao Bahadur's death, which Ranade mourned very sincerely. Another loss of a more intimate character was yet in store for him. His father, who had given Ranade the unique opportunity to be the first among the educated people of his times, passed away in 1877, twenty-four years after the loss of his mother. The years that elapsed between Ranade's advent to Poona in 1871 and his transfer to Nasik

in 1878 were for him years of progress and useful service. But equally well they were years of trial and ordeal. Ranade emerged from these trials a stronger, though perhaps a little sadder, man.

His transfer to Nasik was a part of this series of trials. Ranade's support to the ruler of Baroda in his conflict with the Government of India, had already created a feeling of uneasiness about him in the highest quarters. The famine work of the Sarvajanic Sabha though helpful to the cause of famine relief was not always liked by the officials whose shortcomings were occasionally exposed in the course of the Sabha's representations. That the Sabha was really guided by Ranade was an open secret and served to make him the object of suspicion and dislike on the part of some of the highest officials. His lukewarm and somewhat critical attitude towards the Delhi Darbar resulting in suggestions for the revision of the administrative and the financial system filled the cup of official disfavour to the full. Ranade was not ignorant of these consequences. In fact throughout his public career he had often received friendly warnings from his official friends to the effect that the nature of his public activities was retarding his well deserved advancement in official rank. To these well-meant suggestions Ranade's reply was always the same. He would not, to secure official favour, deviate from what he considered to be his duty to truth and to the motherland. With characteristic readiness to suffer even the worst consequences he added, 'fortunately my wants are few.'

Ranade's transfer to Nasik was received in all quarters as a mark of official disfavour. Ranade, however, did not change his course of conduct in the slightest degree on that account. Without losing his contact with activities in Poona he started fresh movements in Nasik. A library, a town hall and a book-publishing society were the activities initiated in Nasik. During his very first year at Nasik, however, Ranade contracted a severe illness which developed into typhoid fever. Ranade had come to Poona on the very first signs of ailment. Though the reform activity, and in the case of his own marriage the lack of reform activity, of Ranade had roused feelings of opposition among several sections of the people of Maharashtra the news of his

serious illness served to dispel all these clouds of unfavourable comment. People of all castes and shades of opinion vied with one another in expressing their anxiety and readiness to help, even in orthodox ways which Ranade would hardly have approved. Ranade recovered from this illness to the joy of his fellow citizens. The Ranade that recovered was in a sense a new Ranade. His apprenticeship of trial and training as the first servant of his people was well served, and he emerged as no mere suitor for public notice and favour but the acknowledged and revered friend, philosopher and guide of all progressive elements in the land. His convalescence was signalled by the starting of the Journal of the Sarvajanic Sabha. This quarterly periodical served for nearly eighteen years as a channel of almost international communication for the movements favoured by Ranade and it attained a very high rank among journals of its kind.

The journal could well have been described as the Ranade Journal in as much as almost every issue contained some contribution on a weighty subject from Ranade's pen. Most of these articles were naturally published anonymously, but their family likeness to those of his writings that are published under his name is so unmistakable as to leave little doubt as to their authorship. It is equally remarkable that though the occasion for each article was a different one the basic scheme of thought is throughout one and the same. A brief outline of the fundamental thoughts expressed through these articles will suffice to give the reader an idea as to the main features of this scheme.

✓ On social subjects Ranade showed his characteristic capacity to fit in a new reform with an old practice. Thus as regards the position of women in Hindu society he distinguished between different epochs of social history. The Vedic age was according to him the classical age of Hindu culture. Stability and prosperity in material life were reflected in progressive thoughts and free institutions. Women were as free as men and according to their inclinations and opportunities took part in all the activities of life. In respect of marriage they were free to choose their grooms as the practice of Swayamwar shows. The age considered as most suitable for a girl to marry was twelve, though consummation of

marriage was not recommended till the girl reached her sixteenth year. For boys the minimum and maximum limits of marriageable age were sixteen and twenty-five. These healthy practices fell into disuse during the period of decay that followed. This Pauranik period is supposed to coincide with the prevalence of Buddhism and attacks of increasing strength from the non-Aryan tribes. The Buddhists looked upon women as inconvenient obstacles in the way of renunciation and the non-Aryans coveted them mostly for their pleasure. Under the circumstances the Aryans departed from their older traditions and relegated women to a secluded and subordinate station. With the establishment of peace and prosperity the ideals of the Aryan, i. e. the cultured age, have to be restored.

The economic and financial problems of the day naturally attracted most notice. Famines and riots supplied the occasion to enter into an exhaustive survey of the basic economic problems of India. That the poverty of the country was the chief evil of which famines and riots were the symptoms, was the central theme. Government was blamed for not undertaking a constructive and comprehensive remedy. Mere palliatives such as famine relief and debt-legislation will not suffice. By a steadying of the land-revenue demand and by otherwise increasing the attractions of agriculture as a business the nation's capital and enterprise were to be diverted to this main industry of the country. Other avenues such as manufacture, trade and finance were also to be actively encouraged. A class of substantial farmers and well-to-do businessmen could alone supply the natural leadership of society. A mere bureaucratic administration could never hope to lead the people to any constructive purpose. Ranade strenuously opposed the claim of the Government that they were themselves owners of all land. A reference is made to this issue in the following terms. 'We have always maintained, and will continue to maintain till there is no occasion left for it, that the state has no proprietary rights in cultivated or waste lands, and that its interest is confined to a claim for a share of the produce, which may be more or less onerous, but is not of the nature of a monopoly or differential rent.'

On the subject of finance, with which Ranade had come into first hand contact on account of his membership of the Finance Committee, he had equally sound and progressive views to offer to the readers of the Journal. The difficulties of the financial situation were traced unmistakably to heavy military expenditure, enormous home charges, costly administration and an unjustifiable renunciation of customs duties on the part of the Government of India. A reduction in military expenditure, a lowering of home charges and their transformation into rupee instead of sterling liabilities, a replacement of British by the less costly Indian personnel and imposition of duties on foreign imports were the reforms suggested. While foreign borrowing as such was not denounced it was suggested that foreign management should in no case be allowed to penetrate into any important industry in India. The scope of the purposes for which loans were floated was to be extended so as to take in works of economic progress and security. The subject of federal finance was anticipated with all its attendant difficulties and it was suggested that all direct taxes should be handed over to the provinces, the central government reimbursing itself by a proportionate levy of contributions placed on the constituent units.

✓Ranade's prepossession for a decentralised structure was carried even to the villages. While the districts could not be made financial units they were to be made administrative units to be confederated in a suitable form under the provincial governments. The Panchayats were to play a living and important role in organising the new administrative and economic life of the people. Consultative bodies formed for the various units of administration were to be composed of representatives of interests and experience rather than of groups of citizens formed for no other purpose than that of elections. All administrative services were to be recruited as the result of competitive examinations. All classes irrespective of their resources were to be enabled to take advantage of these examinations. There was to be no hereditary ruling class based either on race or on resources. While the main advantages to be gathered from England's political experience

were to be welcomed the actual setting up of institutions was to be conditioned by national needs and aptitudes.

India was to work for its own emancipation by a programme of strict self-reliance. In thought and action, in industry and administration, and in social as well as cultural matters a national pattern was to be evolved. Our progress depended on the success of this attempt rather than on anything else. Individual items of activity were to conform to this pattern. While the help of parties in British politics was not to be shunned we were not to depend on them. It was recognised that historically many of the progressive steps taken by the British Government in India have been due to pressure exercised by some political party in Great Britain. But the basic urge for all reform must come from the Indian people themselves.

Considering that the princes of the Deccan took up their legitimate share in the working of the Sarvajanik Sabha it is not surprising that Ranade had devoted a fairly good number of his contributions to the Journal to subjects referring to state administration. Of these some refer to the administration of individual rulers or ministers. But there are several common features of his observations which have a wider importance. He insisted upon the administration of the states being put on a constitutional basis. In fact it was suggested that along with the oath of allegiance to the paramount power an oath of loyalty to the constitution of the state must also be administered to every new incumbent to the Gadi. The constitution in all its essentials should be reduced to written law leaving matters of the supreme authority of the ruler to be regulated by precedent as in the case of the British crown. In all states the ministers were to have a definite field of free action allotted to them. In this field they were to act without need of further sanction from the ruler, to whom only an appeal could be made by any one who felt aggrieved by the minister's act. The ministers would be helped in respect of law-making by a representative council composed of representatives of interests and experience. In any case the progress towards enfranchisement and constitutional rule made by the states should keep pace with the advance made in the

British Indian provinces. The services in states should be open to free competition and should as a rule be filled by state subjects. ✓ The states also were to follow the scheme of decentralisation of authority to districts and villages as this was more in keeping with Indian ideas and needs. ✓ In effect Ranade wanted the states to be 'schools of self-education and progress in political emancipation.'

Education, elementary as well as higher, attracted Ranade's attention in the pages of the quarterly. The Education Commission of 1880 was suspected to have been influenced by missionary propaganda. There were missionary colleges and high schools in several parts of India. It was urged before this commission that the state should concentrate its financial resources on the progress of primary education leaving secondary and, even to a greater extent, the higher education to be privately financed. Ranade seems to have opposed this position both on general and practical grounds. In his opinion it is at least as necessary that higher talent of skill and guidance in all walks of life should be properly trained as that the rank and file of the people should receive a minimum of general instruction. If only we care for the latter and neglect the former the level of progress will be very low. On the other hand those who receive higher education will themselves in turn facilitate the progress of education among their less fortunate countrymen. Even ignoring these general objections ✓ to the scheme of the withdrawal of the state from the field of higher education, it must be observed that withdrawal by the state till the national agencies have developed enough strength would amount to handing over the education of the intelligent classes to missionary bodies. The number of Indian private societies undertaking higher education was then very small and Ranade had a veritable horror of allowing Indian students at the most impressionable part of their life to be under missionary influences of a foreign religion. ✓ His horror in this respect was only matched by his abhorrence of the atheism that certain professors were teaching in their class rooms. Ranade severely criticised the late Principal Bain of the Deccan College for his lapse in this matter. He was reconciled to a secular but not to an ungodly education. ✓

A FIERY ORDEAL

Judging from the mass of weighty literature which, quarter after quarter, Ranade produced for the Journal one would be tempted to infer that during the period of his authorship he must have been in possession of at least normal leisure and quiet. As a matter of fact in every respect this was by far the most eventful and busy period of his life. In the very first year of the career of the new journal, and almost within a few months of Ranade's recovery from serious illness, a fiery ordeal was in store for him. In May 1879 an old palace of the Peishwas was situated in the heart of Poona was gutted by fire, and another was almost half-burnt. The former building was used for government purposes. At this time the rumblings of unsettlement in some of the rural areas were being heard in the Deccan. One Vasudeo Balwant Phadke conceived the idea of overthrowing the British power in the Maratha country by a secret organisation of force. The outward indications of his activity were to be witnessed on a larger scale in days to follow in the shape of ruthless dacoities. But viewing the whole situation together the Government of the day most unaccountably mistook Ranade's role in the society of his day. Far from being a friend of the revolutionaries his influence was always cast on the side of a sober understanding of the situation with all its limitations and possibilities. Having a shrewd guess of what was passing in the mind of government authorities Ranade's friends exerted themselves to the full to unravel the fire mystery. They succeeded in this and the incendiary was discovered to be a clerk in one of the government book depots situated in the old palace who, to cover the proofs of his embezzlement, had set fire to the whole building, and later on had applied the match to another palace to give the whole happening a more sinister look. But whatever merit there would have been in this otherwise helpful circumstance was, for the authorities, taken away by the fact that the self-confessed culprit was found to bear the name of 'Ranade'. This was no more than an accident and Ranade himself was in no way related to the person. But Government then was not in a mood to look at things on the assumption of innocence. Ranade

was ordered from Poona to Dhulia, the transfer from Nasik, which was his post of duty, having been made without even consulting the High Court.

As was expected there was considerable agitation over this summary treatment of a responsible officer and a respected leader. Ranade, however, was the least affected by the event. Knowing that all his routine was under strict surveillance, he still continued his usual course of industrious and devoted life of many-sided service. In due course of time the court cases regarding incendiary and rebellious crimes were disposed off according to the law of the land. Ranade was found to be without a stain of complicity in either. Luckily for everybody the Governorship of the province changed hands in 1880. The regime of Sir Richard Temple, described by the Sarvajanik Sabha as an incubus, was re-placed by the freer rule of Sir James Fergusson, who seemed to have developed a genuine appreciation for the high qualities of Ranade. As though to make amends for his past ill-treatment Ranade was transferred from one place of honour to another. From Presidency Magistrate, Bombay, he was made First Class Sub-Judge, Special Judge for the administration of the Deccan Agriculturists Relief Act, Small Causes Judge and Additional Special Judge in succession. Ranade took this turn of fortune with the same stoic composure that he had maintained throughout his period of persecution. The work in the Small Causes Court was very much to his taste, as equity was ever the favourite muse that he admired even in preference to law, which has been described as reason without passion. His work in connection with the Agriculturists Relief Act was not only to his taste but was veritably a big part of his mission. He carried it out with almost religious and patriotic zeal. Many doubtful features of that well-meant but ill-fated law, such as the provision of conciliation preliminary to adjudication, were retained at least for some while because of the advocacy and practical good work of Ranade. The basic conditions of Indian economic life were vividly impressed on the mind of Ranade by his travel through the hedges and by-paths of the Deccan villages.

The number of institutions that Ranade helped to found during the period following immediately on his persecution

is a good indication of his expanding influence for good. The Arbitration Court was established in 1879. The Deccan Education Society was the premier non-official society, formed on a missionary principle of self-sacrifice, for propagating modern education. Those who started the New English School in 1880 as the first of the activities of this body, had the fullest support of Ranade. National education, like a national church and a press, was according to him a necessary feature of the life of a renaissance people. Public spirited effort is needed in all these spheres. Ranade continued till his death to guide the managers of this Society through several periods of trial through which they had to pass. A society for encouraging publication of good books and a conference of authors belong to this period. The founding of the Female High School, the premier girls' high school in Poona, took place in 1882. Sir James Fergusson presided over the inaugural meeting, at which Mrs. Ranade was one of the speakers. The Deccan Paper Mill was established by the enterprise of a Parsi capitalist of Poona who had the fullest support of the wider experience of Ranade.

ON THE NATIONAL STAGE

But the most important, and from Ranade's standpoint the most hopeful, of the new beginnings was the establishment of the Indian National Congress. Several persons of patriotic and farsighted statesmanship were responsible for this fateful step. Some of these were Europeans, even Europeans in the employ of the Government itself. To have a common association for all the reformist and progressive causes in India, a national organisation was considered to be most helpful. The shrewder members of the bureaucracy had their own apprehensions in the matter of future development of such popular associations. The leaders of Indian opinion were diffident as to their capacity to carry on such a comprehensive task. Ranade with the help of the progressive elements among official and non-official Englishmen, laid the foundations of the premier political association of the land. With the establishment of the Congress Ranade stepped into a much higher and wider sphere of action than he had occupied till then. He had to work, having been

an official, mostly from behind the scenes. But his influence was all pervasive and was always exercised for good. The same year, 1885, which witnessed the establishment of the Congress saw Ranade in the Bombay Legislative Council to which he was appointed by Sir James Fergusson's Government. Councils in those days had very restricted functions. Even as 'talk-shops' they were somewhat disappointing. But Ranade carried within the Council the same routine of constructive work that he was accustomed to do in public bodies and on public platforms.

The growing eminence of Ranade brought to him on this occasion, as it did on a few other occasions, pressing invitations from some of the Indian states to join their service in a very high and distinguished capacity. Ranade could not, naturally, think of circumscribing the sphere of his activities and interests in this manner. But even if he had for a moment faltered in his own resolution his friends, European as well as Indian, would hardly have permitted him to leave the field of his expanding public service. Under Ranade's guidance a new public life was being built up in Poona. Its influence spread all over the country, and even to Great Britain. By deputations and memorials even the British electors and Parliament were made familiar with the doings of Ranade. Other parts of India tried to support and copy what was being done in Poona. Those who hoped for a national revival in India looked upon this work with great confidence. As Ranade was the very soul of all this activity, his removal from the scene for one reason or another would have meant a collapse of the new structure.

The growing preoccupation of a political and national work did not serve to lessen Ranade's interest in social and economic affairs. These were always nearest to his heart, though he recognised that even in the interest of these vital causes a transformation in the character and policy of government was essential. While Ranade was posted at Nagar he took part in an important function connected with the opening of a new prayer-hall for the local Prarthana Samaj. Ranade utilised the opportunity to explain his outlook on the tenets of that Samaj. The basic plank of that association's faith was monotheism, belief in one god. Such a belief was compatible with readiness

to recognise several interpretations of god's will. Various prophets through their own holy utterances, interpret this will to their own people. The language used and the manner of appeal, and the particular things emphasised are all dependent on the special circumstances of time and place. But in all these holy writings there is a substance of eternal truth that all should try and understand. Having understood, it is the duty and the privilege of each person to carry out these great truths and noble principles in his own life as far as possible.

Such a life of struggling virtue, led in co-operation with others having a similar faith and longing, gives the greatest possible sense of spiritual bliss and moral achievement. Our efforts at understanding and following divine will are strengthened by prayer to the supreme being who governs the universe according to the eternal law. The Sanatana Dhārma, as Hindu religion at its best was called, was such a religion of universal brotherhood and human piety. Ranade welcomed the good elements in all religions, but believed it to be possible only for the Hindu religion by absorbing the rest to be the nucleus of a world religion. The movement for the theistic revival had thus an individual, national and international purpose. It was in the fullest consciousness of these implications of his activity that Ranade began in an increasing measure to associate himself with the movements of religious and social reform. He was a devout Hindu, though not an orthodox one. He was prepared to utilise the influence of religious authorities if they were in turn ready to discharge their function of re-interpreting religion to suit new needs. He was not for an exclusive religious group. Reconversions to the Hindu faith were encouraged by him. Even such supposedly orthodox movements as cow-protection, Vedic learning, and even devotional bodies used to receive his willing help.

In fact Ranade discovered by his own growing spiritual experience that the extreme devotion to one god, even by a name called and in a form worshipped, was neither inconsistent with rationalism nor with monotheism. Properly understood it is a device which is capable of considerable misuse, but is not without its proper use in able hands. To

preach theoretical truths like monotheism and human brotherhood to intellectually ill developed people is a lengthy and a highly doubtful process. Wholehearted concentration of faith in one god and a recognition of the tie of brotherhood with all those who avowed the same faith is an easier act of devotion, for which an emotional background is readily available. While the liberation of the intellect should be attempted on the widest possible scale the springs of religious faith and devotion, should not be weakened in the process. With growing experience Ranade became more devotional, not less. Devotional prayers, he knew, were necessary to strengthen free intellectual and moral effort on the part of the individual. This doctrine has some times been called the higher theism of the Prarthana Samaj. Whatever name we give to it, it is undoubtedly the nearest approach to a rational and universal religion that we have yet seen. Ranade was convinced that it was the central theme of the Sanatana Hindu Dharma as well as of its popular version the Bhagwat Dharma.

Though he had very deep religious convictions, Ranade was ready to keep these aside while working with those who did not share them. In his activities for social reform he was prepared to co-operate on the one hand with atheists and agnostics like Principal Agarkar and on the other with orthodox Brahmins like the late Raja of Miraj, who was induced to become the president of a social reform association started in 1889 under Ranade's influence. To give the much needed unity and strength to the movements for social reform going on in different parts of India the Indian Social Conference was started in 1887 mainly under Ranade's influence. The Congress was then held in Madras and the Social Conference immediately followed in the same place. Since then till the very day of his demise this conference and the movements associated with it held pride of place among Ranade's interests. He felt that he was fulfilling his mission most appropriately in altering the national mind so as to enable it to appreciate more and more the essential dignity of man as man and the social equality of all creeds and classes. Almost all intense natures have appreciated the superior claims of constructive work. Ranade's work with regard to this conference is fit to inspire the most ardent and the most self-

less to further activity without being discouraged by apathy, ridicule or opposition.

Industrial and economic progress which attracted Ranade's close attention was also considerably developed during this period. In 1885, the Government of India nominated him a member of the Finance Committee appointed to consider the possibilities of financial reorganisation and retrenchment. As military expenditure, home charges, and the appointments to and payments in the superior services were not really open to consideration in a committee of this nature the practical out-turn of its labours was almost nil. But its activities took Ranade to such central places of political importance as Calcutta, Simla and Madras. The practical and inside experience gained and the contacts established were helpful to the future activities of Ranade. Ranade, however, had sufficient sense of perception and proportion to recognise that the real field of economic reform lay in developing the enterprise of the people themselves. With a view to create a mental outlook favourable to industrial enterprise and to help a solution of industrial problems by common deliberation and guidance Ranade took the lead in organising the Industrial Conference of Western India in 1890. This Conference not only evoked systematic thought on industrial and economic problems, but it also brought about the much needed association among intellectuals, businessmen and public workers. The epoch-making essay on Indian Economics read by Ranade in 1892 had its origin in the practical difficulties experienced by businessmen in their relations with Government and foreign competitors. In the course of that essay Ranade was arguing no mere academic theme but prescribing a line of approach to the economic problems of India for the government of the country.

At this stage of his career Ranade had outlived all opposition from official quarters. The Government while not inclined, or perhaps not free, to recognise the validity of all that Ranade said were prepared to recognise his scholarship and public spirit. His work on the Finance Committee brought him the honour of a C. I. E. In his judicial career also he was promoted from post to post as occasion offered. In 1887 he was confirmed in the post of the special judge for pur-

poses of the administration of the Deccan Agriculturists' Relief Act. As noted before this work was to the liking of Ranade, but it incidentally caused almost a fatal illness in 1891. Public Health precautions in our villages are even now far from satisfactory. Ranade insisted on going to all villages and during his stay usually occupied such places as the temple or the chavdi so that he might establish contact with the largest number of people. Such a mode of life often exposed him to serious contagion. While thus camping at the village of Karmale in Sholapur District he was attacked by a bad type of cholera. As the good fortune of the country would have it, the tender nursing of his wife just succeeded in saving his life. He had no need to endanger his life in this way much longer. Within a couple of years he was appointed to be an additional Judge of Her Majesty's High Court in Bombay, in the place rendered vacant by the premature demise of Ranade's friend and co-worker Justice K. T. Telang.

TWILIGHT

To a few contemporaries of Ranade his elevation to the bench of the High Court must have appeared as a great loss to public life. As a district or subordinate judge he enjoyed considerable latitude to take part in public activities. His connection with almost all political activities of the day was an open secret but the government did not care to interfere by placing any sweeping restrictions on him. As a high court judge, however, he had to keep off the politics of the day, at least as much as his unique position among Indian leaders would allow him to do. This was perhaps a loss to public life. But from his own standpoint this contraction of his activity in the political field came at an opportune moment. He had taxed his strength to breaking point and his two severe illnesses had permanently impaired his health. The comparative ease of his new position enabled him to serve the country a little longer than what would have been possible had he continued to move from village to village.

Incidentally his stay in Bombay brought him into closer association with the Prarthana Samaj. To his weekly prayers at the Samaj we owe the fine set of his sermons which is his

best legacy for the Marathi reader. During the course of his talks at the Prarthana Samaj he did not content himself with a purely devotional and didactic function. He addressed himself to such analytical and historical themes as the role of protestantism in the evolution of Hindu religion. His contention was that for the constant purification and reformation of religious faiths and social practices protestant trends establish themselves from time to time. Many of the Upanishads are protestant in their purpose, so are the Maratha saints of Sivajee's times and so was the Prarthana Samaj. This protestantism was natural to all living and healthy societies. Hindu protestantism had points of similarity with the European movement ushered in by Luther. Religious protestantism was accompanied by a spirit of self-reliance which was a great asset for material and political progress as well. It was through such talks which could appeal to a rational mind that Ranade tried to restate religious truths.

Ranade's close association with the University, which had been broken since he left the Elphinstone College, was taken up on his appointment to the High Court bench. As Dean and Syndic Ranade influenced many of the educational reforms of that period chief among which was the introduction of the vernaculars as an optional subject for the B. A. examination. Though the public activities of Ranade had shrunk, his interest in public affairs had not waned. It was a very fortunate circumstance that since 1887 when Gokhale was first introduced to Ranade he found a worthy disciple who could more freely carry out the teachings of the master. What the unparalleled combination of master and pupil was capable of achieving was proved by Gokhale's evidence in England before the Welby Commission in 1897. Only a year before, Ranade had helped the formation of the Deccan Sabha, a body which aimed at non-communal public activity with a view to realise human justice and social equality. The formation of this body was a sequel to the growing influence in the Sarvajanic Sabha of a party which was not prepared to be guided by what were declared to be Ranade's ways of conducting the policy of the association. Gokhale was the most active member of the newly established body and went to England as its representative.

Not only physical ailments and a disappointing experience of some of his erstwhile associates but also the physical world around him seemed to cloud the prospect for Ranade during the closing years of the nineteenth century. Plague, which broke out in Bombay in a virulent form, and famines, which overtook a major part of the country, combined to throw out of gear all the normal routine of private and public life. To add to these external troubles Ranade's own health began to give way. During 1899 he was the victim of a sun-stroke, while he was resting at a hill station. He recovered from the stroke, but his strength was never fully restored. For the first time in the history of the Social Conference Ranade found it impossible to attend the annual session in 1900. The Conference was held at Lahore and Gokhale was deputed to read Ranade's speech. All assembled at the Conference missed Ranade most poignantly, but even they were not prepared for the shock that lay in store for them. Try as he would Ranade could not rally by short spells of change or rest. A long period of rest was not to his liking, as he had recognised, though he did not openly declare, the serious nature of his trouble.

The gradually increasing debility caused by excessive work had developed into an acute and insidious type of heart disease. Ranade did not desire to nurse himself into inactivity. 'Life is given for work,' he declared, 'and if I am not to be spared for work I do not desire to live.' It was in this spirit that Ranade went on discharging all his multifarious duties till it was physically impossible for him to do any more. On the seventh of January 1901 he was compelled to take long leave. But almost from that day he began to grow worse. There was a most misleading rally on the very day of his death, the 16th of January, when he succumbed to a serious attack of the heart. With his last heart beat the light that guided renaissance India for nearly forty years was suddenly put out. He studied till the last hour and guided reform activity almost till the last minute. He was the embodiment of an active faith in the destiny of man and in the civilising mission of his motherland. A universal wail of grief went forth when he died and for a long time after his death no public worker in India, to whatever camp he might belong, felt that things were all that they should

be. Everybody had learned to look to Ranade for a lead, for an appreciation, at least for a criticism. But Ranade had done his work so well that those whom he inspired and trained took up the work where he left it and tried to carry on the struggle against internal and external forces of evil. Forty years of Ranade's own work were succeeded by an equal period of the achievements of those who followed him. Thanks to the pioneering efforts and farsighted instruction of Ranade himself, the fight for freedom and progress becomes more intense and more hopeful every day.

Ranade's life was a fully dedicated life. He discovered his mission early in life and in the full knowledge of the service that he was called upon to render he continued to work so as to help the realisation of the divine purpose in him. He divined that the stage of social and political evolution in India at which he was born was a 'pre-butterfly' stage. The national life which was bound by a crust of old prejudices and inhibitions was awaiting the liberation that would come through internal development. To make the nation conscious of this destiny and to guide it along its earlier steps of progress was his allotted task which he most successfully discharged before leaving the field of action.

A host of workers in several fields of activity now find their path illuminated for them even by a streak of light coming from Ranade's utterances. To compare Ranade with other great men of our and other countries is not easy as he touched life at more points than most great men of history. But it is very characteristic of him that he can be compared only with such people as had a devout faith in the purposes of divinity and as worked to instil a religious fervour in the nation's and the individual's life. Thus his enthusiasm for industrialism is reminiscent of Saint Simon in France who desired to reorganise society on the basis of modern industrialism, which was to take the place of the old theistic religion. Ranade indeed had a greater sense of proportion as between moral and material values, but the fervour for industrial reorganisation is clearly as intense in Ranade as it might have been even in the most devoted Saint Simonian.

Coming nearer home very few people now realise what a great national danger it was from which Ranade has saved them. The establishment of the East India Company's administration was accompanied by the setting up of churches of the Christian religion. Many of these were honest and devoted attempts at spreading the light of heaven as they saw it, and India was sufficiently tolerant to give a fair reception to all creeds on a purely doctrinaire basis. But the association between the rulers and the missionaries of the new religion was threatening to prove most disastrous for the health and welfare of the nation's soul. That a few people were converted was no loss as compared to the undermining of the self-esteem and the self-confidence of the intellectual and leading classes. If the menace of the missionaries did not attain the success that the Buddhists attained in this land the credit must be given, besides the aloofness of the state, to the counter-reformation and self-vindication carried on by Ranade, and others who strove with him. What the great Sankaracharya achieved in stemming the rising tide of Buddhism, which had, at an earlier date, threatened to engulf Indian culture, Ranade achieved in relation to the Christian missionaries and their insidious propaganda. But like Sankaracharya Ranade was no Sanyasin nor did he prefer an inactive life of mere meditation or renunciation. His religion was that of an active man touching life at all points, and benefitting by the surroundings to attain the fullest possible development for the service of what he considered was the divine purpose.

Every soul is a spark from the divine flame and with the light vouched to itself is required to pass through all the situations of its existence on earth so as to discharge conscientiously what it feels to be its mission. Allying oneself with one's fellowmen in the collective struggle for the happy and improving life of humanity was the Dharma for which we all live or ought to live. In its activism, in its patriotic objective and in its spiritual foundation Ranade's life was comparable most of all to that of the great saint of Maharashtra, who in Sivajee's days had rendered a similar national service, namely Ramdas. But unlike Ramdas, Ranade was a man of the world, no mere missionary, nor a religious guru. Great men are

never exactly one like the other. Each has his uniqueness. Ranade's uniqueness consists in having combined in his person the uniquenesses of more than one great man. Perhaps the need of the hour for this chosen country of ours was so great as to necessitate such a concentrated leadership and direction. We might pick up not only instruction from what Ranade has left to us as his intellectual legacy, but we might also gather hope and courage for our own appointed tasks. Did not Gokhale, the chosen among the disciples of Ranade, say, "We can only humbly trust that He who gave Mr. Ranade to this nation, may give another like him in the fullness of time. Meanwhile it is our duty to cherish his name, treasure up his example, and be true to his teachings in the faith that a nation that has produced a Ranade need not despair of its future."

CHAPTER I

RANADE'S PHILOSOPHY OF LIFE

✓ Above all mere ordinances and institutes stands the law eternal, of justice and equality, of pity and compassion, the suggestions of the conscience within and of nature without us. ✓ We can no more resist the stream of these influences as working for righteousness than we can roll back the tide. All realprudence would dictate that we should take full measure of these influences and decide how far we must accommodate ourselves to the inevitable." (M. 234).

No account of Mr. Ranade's outlook and views upon the varied problems of India can be undertaken without any reference to his philosophy of life, which served as a basis for his practical policy. Mr. Ranade was no opportunist nor was he an empirical man. He had by a long process of intensive and comprehensive thinking framed for himself a number of fundamental truths. As a new situation developed or as a fresh problem arose he would examine it in the light of his first principles. Thus for Ranade the first or the major premiss of his syllogism of action was supplied by his own hard thinking. The external world supplied the second or the minor premiss. The course of conduct that he followed in any given situation was the logical conclusion that followed from the relation of the external situation to the internal principle. None can follow the working of Ranade's mind who has not appreciated the essentially purposeful, deliberate and rational character of all his thought and action.

In Ranade philosophy and action, piety and patriotism, were so harmoniously and inextricably woven together that even those who were nearest to him could not say definitely whether he was a greater saint or a greater patriot. Thus the late Mr. Gokhale who for fourteen years enjoyed the closest intellectual and moral contact with Ranade, and that too during the most mature period of the latter's life, held that in Ranade the patriot was more predominant than the saint. In

his address before the Hindu Union Club of Bombay, delivered on the occasion of the second anniversary of Ranade's death Mr. Gokhale observed as follows:—

“There have been reformers and great reformers in the history of the world and of India too, who have preached reform and braved persecution for the sake of truth and of conscience, because they heard a higher voice urging them to proclaim that truth at all hazards. I think such men stand on a pedestal all their own—the highest on which man can stand. Mr. Ranade's platform was not this—he preached reform, not merely because his conscience urged him to do so, but also because his intellect was satisfied that without reform there was no hope for us as a nation. Men who preach truth for its own sake live really for all humanity, though their words are addressed to the people of a particular time and place. Mr. Ranade was content to live and work for his country only and, though he was a careful student of the history and institutions of other people, he studied them mainly to derive lessons from them for the guidance of his own countrymen. I think this essential difference between Mr. Ranade and other great reformers has to be clearly grasped in order to understand the true character of his work and teachings.”

Such an emphatic statement coming from so devoted a follower of Ranade as the late Mr. Gokhale, might appear to detract from the greater glory of a saint to which Ranade was, in the estimation of many of his friends, entitled. The late Rao Bahadur G. V. Joshi, who was intimately connected with Ranade as his principal helper in the cause of economic and political reform, clearly thought that Gokhale was mistaken in this view regarding the mainspring of the reforming zeal of his Guru. Only three years after Gokhale had addressed the Hindu Union Club on the death anniversary of Ranade, Mr. Joshi was called upon to deliver the address from the same platform. On that occasion Mr. Joshi pointedly referred to Gokhale's statement reproduced above. Mr. Joshi argued as follows—

“ And in this connection it might be remarked that Mr. Justice Ranade did all this work not simply from patriotic motives but as religious work and with religious zeal. With him life was a duty—a holy gift of God—to be religiously employed in His service. The Hon’ble Prof. Gokhale speaking from this platform some years ago on a similar occasion observed—‘the first thing that struck any one who came in contact with Mr. Ranade, as underlying all his marvellous personality, was his pure, fervent, profound patriotism.’ Mr. Ranade was no doubt a most zealous and devoted patriot; he loved India with an intense and passionate love and laboured all his life for her welfare. But to my thinking he was much more than a mere patriot or nationalist. His sympathies and views were broader, and he followed a higher ideal. He was one of the most religious of men, and what most struck and impressed me during my association with him was his simple, exalted and fervent piety. He always seemed to feel that he was in the presence of the Almighty, a humble servant doing his appointed task as best he could and with the light of faith that was vouchsafed to him.”

Such a divergence of opinion between two of the closest associates of Ranade appears at first sight to be inexplicable and it creates some uncertainty about a fundamental trait of Ranade’s mind. If we analyse the difference a little more closely we shall find that the difference is more apparent than real. Mr. Gokhale did not deny the essentially religious cast of Ranade’s outlook on life. In the same speech in which he puts in the forefront the patriotism of Ranade he bears full testimony to his saintliness. He observes :—

“ It is no exaggeration to say that younger men who came in personal contact with him felt as in a holy presence, not only uttering ‘ nothing base ’ but afraid even of thinking unworthy thoughts while in his company.”

In fact the great predominance of patriotism in Ranade’s essentially religious mind was the result of a deliberate choice.

Mr. Ranade felt, as even Mr. Joshi observed, that he was promoting the cause of God in serving the cause of his country. There have been saints who have been engrossed in their own moral uplift; there have been others who worked for the vindication of some principle irrespective of its immediate bearings, and there have been still others who instead of withdrawing themselves from the world or narrowly circumscribing their activity and usefulness have allowed their beneficent influence to touch life at all points of its contact with them. Ranade clearly belonged to this third category of inspired persons. As he was born in India at a particular period of its history it was inevitable that his contacts with the life and problems that faced the Indians should claim the major portion of his activity. But it is remarkable that in writing and talking about Indian problems he always preached the right solution and not only the expedient. As he did not allow narrow nationalism to stand in the way of human brotherhood he did not sacrifice truth to selfishness. Ranade speaks of all human beings as children of God and he was convinced that in serving the cause of Indian reformation he was serving the twin causes that all saintly persons had at heart, namely, humanity and truth.¹

Ranade's thoughts and activities were so varied that it was to an extent inevitable that different people should carry differing impressions about his main interests in life. Still between

1. The fetters of the mind, once realized as fetters, will drop off themselves. They cease to be fetters, and even become a discipline for a better existence. It may take years and generations to achieve this result. We may all have to die and become manure for the seeds of life in future generations. But once we enter upon the right path, the torch of light blazing inside us, which we only seek to darken with our artificial rush-lights, will show to those who come after us the way to heaven. The way to heaven is a narrow path, and one has to tread upon sharp-edged instruments carefully balancing the weak limbs and spirits. The way to hell is, as you all know, a road well paved with good intentions, and we have only to close our eyes and shut our ears, to be listless and indifferent, lead a butterfly existence, and die intellectually and spiritually. We have pursued that way too long, and it is time now that we should take due care to set our houses in order, as no mere whitewashing and no plastering would remove these hidden sources of our weaknesses. The whole existence must be renovated. The baptism of fire and not of water must be gone through by those who seek a renovation of heart such as this.—(M. 124-125).

Gokhale and Joshi, both of whom were in the closest contact with Ranade, this consideration would not resolve the difference altogether. Apart from the somewhat accidental difference of emphasis it might be said that the appeal of saintliness depends in a large measure on the development of the moral personality of the observer. In 1903, Mr. Gokhale himself was fired by the all-consuming ideal of patriotism. Ranade had done a good deal to nurse this flame and hence it was inevitable that Gokhale should look upon Ranade's patriotism as the most dominant of his virtues. Joshi who was nearer to Ranade in age and who had an independent idealism which he shared with but did not altogether owe to Ranade could take a more comprehensive and proportionate view of Ranade's personality. As Gokhale's own personality developed he also began to realise in proper perspective the several qualities of Ranade. Speaking in Madras in July 1904, a year after his speech in Bombay, Mr. Gokhale referred to Ranade's mission as follows:—

“He was one of those men who appear, from time to time in different countries and on different occasions, to serve as a light to guide the foot-steps of our weak and erring humanity.”

With the lapse of years Gokhale came to appreciate better the essentially moral side of Ranade's personality. In his introductory contribution to the Marathi book on Ranade's life written by Mrs. Ranade, Mr. Gokhale bears testimony to the fully developed righteousness of his Guru's character and talks of him as an inspired person, in fact as an incarnation of the supreme being. Apart from these personal reactions it is certain that all who knew him well concurred in mentioning saintliness, piety and righteousness as the foremost among his qualities. It is only such a man for whom virtue is the chief interest in life who is fitted to lead a nation on the path of reformation.

Much of the confusion regarding Ranade's saintliness will be removed if it is remembered that he was no monk but a man of pious and devoted temperament. ✓ To live a full, expansive and dutiful existence here with a view to qualify best for the life

to come was his motto.² Ranade did not believe in idolatrous worship, but he was a firm believer in the moral government of the universe at the hands of a supreme being. Devotion to the will and guidance of this superior influence was of the very essence of Ranade's philosophy.³ On that account, however, it must not be supposed that he was a fatalist or an advocate of renunciation. In fact Ranade thought that fatalism was the worst form of atheism. To deny to the supreme being the justice and wisdom of providing for purposeful human effort which leads to righteousness and liberation was in a sense worse than denying the very existence of God. By submitting our will to the guidance of a higher will and purpose human beings are to pick up a fresh self-confidence and hopefulness which are essentials of all individual and collective progress. It appears that in this respect Ranade had been influenced as much by the active and vigorous practical religion of the early Aryans as by the example of devoted national service created by the saints of Maharashtra, like Eknath, Tukaram and Ramdas. It is well-known that Ranade avowed himself a follower of Bhagwat Dharma, which was the nearest approach in established creeds to what is known as Prarthana Samaj, of which Ranade was a leading light.

As Ranade was insistent upon a direct communion between the individual and the divine will, he did not accept the absolutely binding character of current religious texts. In a spiritual sense, he would say, "We are children of God, and the voice of God is the only voice which we are bound to listen . . . Great and wise men in the past, as in the present, have a claim upon our regards but they must not come between us and our God."⁴

2. But whether we are great in riches and possessions and whether we are great in the estimation of the world the only thing that is really ours is how far, during the short time that has been allowed to us all, we succeed here in making ourselves better fitted for the existence that is to come. If we can gauge our advance from day to day and from year to year by this standard then I believe we shall find the true reward of our work.—(M. 212).

3. "We must bear our cross," he once said, "not because it is sweet to suffer, but because the pain and the suffering are as nothing compared with the greatness of the issues involved."—(G. 767).

4. Now the new idea which should take up the place of this helplessness and dependence is not the idea of a rebellious overthrow of all authority, but that of freedom responsible to the voice of God in us. Great and wise men in the past, as in the present, have a claim upon our regards, but they must not come between us and our God—the divine principle enthroned in the heart of every one of us, high or low. It is this sense of self-respect, or rather respect for the God in us, which has to be cultivated. It is a very tender plant which takes years and years to make it grow. But there is the capacity and the power, and we owe it as a duty to ourselves to undertake the task. Revere all human authority, pay your respects to all prophets and all revelations, but never let this reverence and respect come in the way of the dictates of conscience, the divine command in us.—(M. 194).

Introspection, knowledge of one's own shortcomings, development of a higher purpose, devotion to the guidance of a supreme being and the constant endeavour to shed our drawbacks and to acquire righteousness were the several steps which Ranade indicated as necessary for the moral development of personality. Liberation was thus one's own work and it had to start with a realisation of the fetters of the mind. This done, the whole course of life becomes a disciplined endeavour to attain a better existence. Ranade's belief in the existence to come is stated in unmistakable words, but he emphatically rejects the notion of the existence being led anywhere away from the earth of our experience and trial.⁵ Moreover, it is evident that he considered that eligibility for a better and higher life depended on a development of all the higher impulses in the course of present life. Not isolation but expansion, not renunciation but duty, not possession but development were the watchwords of Ranade's philosophy.⁶

That this philosophy had a wider application than merely the spiritual side of individual existence is clear from the following extract from Ranade's speech : " In spiritual, if not in temporal matters, the remark is true that a man's wealth is measured not by what he has in the way of possessions outside himself, but by what he is or may become in the way of his own development, from year to year, into higher and fuller life. Liberties bestowed on us by foreigners are concessions

5. The new idea that should come in here is that this Law of Karma can be controlled and set back by a properly trained will, when it is made subservient to a higher will than ours. This we see in our everyday life, and Necessity, or the Fates are, as our own texts tell us, faint obstacles in the way of our advancement if we devote ourselves to the Law of Duty. I admit that this misconception is very hard to remove, perhaps the hardest of the old ideas. But removed it must be, if not in this life or generation, in many lives and generations, if we are ever to rise to our full stature.—(M. 195).

6. Remember, the work of this Conference and of gatherings like this is really this - to make men feel that they have duties and responsibilities for which alone life and health are given to them. That is the sort of philosophy which comes upon me at times, and which, I believe, comes upon every one of us when we look seriously at those things. If any of us feel in our hearts that we have to make amends for the past, I believe that man is the better for his attendance here, even though he may disapprove of any particular items of our programme.—(M. 213).

forced on us by the force of circumstances.⁷ These are not really ours; they are possessions only, not developments."

Ranade had no watertight compartments in his personality, reserving one for private conduct and relegating another to public policy, confining an aspect of it to political action and allotting another to social reform, welcoming his friends to a corner of his heart and pushing his opponents towards another. Ranade had appreciated the divine purpose of human existence and he endeavoured all his life to fulfil that purpose in as many spheres as his duty brought within his reach. As the late Rao Bahadur G. V. Joshi said :—

"The late Mr. Justice Ranade was no inspired prophet or seer, but he had such faith and hope; and it was with such faith and hope that he did the work he did all his life."

Nobody who does not grasp and appreciate the essentially moral and human urge of Ranade's lifework will be enabled to realise the higher justification for the comprehensive and basic reform in Indian life for which he worked. Only one Indian of note before Ranade had seen the issue of Indian liberation and progress in its correct historical and moral perspective. That Indian was Raja Ram Mohan Roy who was the parent of all organised reform activity in India. Though there was hardly any direct contact between the two personalities it is obvious that Ranade was an admirer of Raja Ram Mohan Roy. To look upon the particular and passing phases of human experience in such a way as to promote the deeper divine purpose was the constant endeavour of both Ram Mohan Roy and Ranade. Anybody who desires to understand, and in his own measure follow, the teachings of Ranade must put himself at least intellectually in perfect communion with this exalted conception of human life and duty.

7. But when multitudes of people in different parts of the country yearn for a change in their social surroundings, and each in his place seeks to work it out it can hardly be but that those yearnings and struggle must bear fruit.—(M. 209-210).

CHAPTER II

CREED OF ACTION

"I profess implicit faith in two articles of my creed. This country of ours is the true land of promise. This race of ours is the chosen race." (M. 125-6).

✓ "Whether in the political, or social or religious or commercial, or manufacturing or aesthetic spheres, in literature, in science, in art, in war, in peace, it is the individual and collective man who has to develop his powers by his own exertions in conquering the difficulties in his way." (M. 231-32). ✓

A declaration of faith to the effect that one's own country is the land of promise and that one's own race is the chosen race is by no means a rare practice among leaders of movements aiming at a revival. In fact such an attitude is very much akin to the narrow-minded nationalism which feeds more on racial egoism than on patriotic service. Ranade who was, without doubt, a prominent leader of the Reformation movement in India announced his faith in the twin articles of a promised land and a chosen race. If a superficial student is tempted to conclude that Ranade was only indulging in the well-worn practice of leaders of renaissance, it is not difficult to show that Ranade's faith in the peculiar mission of the Indian people was more than an expedient instrument of popular appeal. But even granting for the moment that Ranade was only following the example of successful revivalists in appealing to the sense of self-esteem among his countrymen, it cannot be gainsaid that he thus laid the most enduring of the bases of Indian regeneration.

Until a people have learnt the possibility of success in their arduous struggle for progress an appeal to the duty of improvement is likely to be fruitless. The lower the depth of degeneration the greater the need to overcome the inertia of defeatism born of centuries of wretchedness. By the middle of the last century the mass of the Indian people

had been reduced to a position of utter helplessness in which their ignorance of the causes of their wretchedness was matched only by a feeling of hopelessness for the future. For any gifted seer and leader of a reformation the first requisite was the creation of hope among his countrymen, at any rate among the more educated sections of the public. Even the call of duty ceases to be effective where no hope of success is entertained. Ranade showed himself to be an unerring student of the history of the rise of nations in broadcasting his message of hope before he unfolded his prescription of duties and obligations.

Two features of the long and chequered history of Indian civilisation confirmed Ranade in his deeper faith about the unique role that the country is designed to play.¹ India veritably is a land of the confluence of cultures. While the basic Aryan culture serves as a background and a large portion of the picture, other cultures such as Muslim, Buddhistic and Christian come to occupy an important position. This co-existence of several cultural trends is not without its natural effect in producing mutual toleration and adjustment. Imperceptibly and intermittently, but all the same surely, an assimilation and intermixture of cultures go on. This development of a common human culture is a special role that the country is destined to play. In all our action we have to push forward, as much as circumstances permit, this appointed task.

Another feature of Indian history that is calculated to strengthen our hope is the relatively peaceful and continuous

1. I profess implicit faith in two articles of my creed. This country of ours is the true land of promise. This race of ours is the chosen race. It was not for nothing that God has showered His choicest blessings on this ancient land of Aryavarta. We can see His hand in history. Above all other countries we inherit a civilization and a religious and social polity which have been allowed to work their own free development on the big theatre of time. There has been no revolution, and yet the old condition of things has been tending to reform itself by the slow process of assimilation. The great religions of the world took their birth here, and now they meet again as brothers prepared to welcome a higher dispensation, which will unite all and vivify all. India alone, among all the countries of the world, has been so favoured, and we may derive much strength of inward hope from such a contemplation. Change for the better by slow absorption—this has been the characteristic feature of our past history.—(M. 125-6).

evolution of Indian life. External attacks and internal disturbances have by no means been unknown in India. But in comparison with other countries of antiquity the sustained peacefulness and progress of India are striking. This tenacious vitality of Indian culture is due to the great adaptiveness of the people. While unwilling to admit that their existing thoughts or practices are essentially wrong, the Indian people are always ready to adapt both these to changing circumstances.⁵ Ranade felt that this unique feature of Indian life should be deliberately nursed so as to realise in India the dream of universal brotherhood and human freedom.

It is only a man who thinks in terms of centuries, if not of ages, that can read into passing events meaning that may not strike the common eye. Thus the repeated conquest of India by foreigners is an experience which provokes immediate resentment and shame in the minds of Indians at large. Mr. Ranade was too good a patriot not to entertain these feelings in a part of his mental make-up. If as a historian he were to write the history of an unsuccessful engagement between the Indian and foreign troops he would indeed not gloat on a defeat of his countrymen. If an actual invasion were to threaten the land the Maratha blood in Ranade's veins would not permit him to remain inactive. But when the best possible resistance has been offered and we are counting our gains and losses so as to prepare for the next campaign, one must take stock of the situation. In the new situation not only may we have to reckon with fresh accession to our population but also with new methods of private and social life introduced by the foreigners.

Ranade was thoroughly immune from a complex of admiration for everything successful. Even in the period of its supersession by more dominant cultures, he entertained the deepest veneration for Vedic Aryan civilisation.⁶ He was, however, in no way inclined to shut his eyes to the good points in a bad situation. Considering that the Aryans themselves were invaders and colonists in their day, Ranade could well afford, in retrospect, to assume the slogan that the enemies of yesterday are the neighbours, friends and even brothers of today.⁷ He was also prepared to learn from a successful enemy so that the strength of the vanquished may grow. And above all he could

realise, against the background of a historical movement of things, the abiding significance of events, which was not always fully apparent to the short sighted or prejudiced observer.

Thus the Muslim conquest of parts of India which appears to be an unmitigated evil to some people had its relieving features for Ranade. Quite apart from the influence produced on arts, industry and culture Muslim rule gave a political unity to large regions, which otherwise would have lived an isolated life. Even in the unified opposition that the Muslim penetration provoked among the Hindus a realisation of wider administrative life can be traced. Never since the days of Emperor Ashok was India so much of a united state as it was under Akbar. In the history of the growth of Indian nationalism Mahomedan immigration and rule have played an important part, and this Ranade was ready to recognise, quite irrespective either of his enthusiasm for Aryan culture or for the fervent patriotism of the Marathas.

The same capacity for singling out the most hopeful features in a dark situation is exemplified by Ranade's attitude towards the British rule in India. Either in regard to the methods of conquest or of the system of their rule no more penetrating and sound criticism could be offered than was done by Ranade himself. He was, however, prepared to recognise the good that the new dispensation had produced. Political, even merely governmental, unity was never so well realised as under the British regime. That the regime was neither indigenous nor perfect is irrelevant to the fact. Even common subjection has its own levelling and unifying influence on the mind and manners of a nation. The birth of Indian nationalism is the outcome of this very process, which Ranade, among others, did his level best to promote. To those who felt that under foreign rule little scope exists for individual enterprise and personal development, Ranade would answer by pointing to the need and opportunities of the masses. The flow of patriotism and enterprise had to be turned from the state to the people, so that the people themselves may one day become the state. It is with such long-range and searching analysis of Indian experience that Ranade carried on his day's work and exhorted his followers to do the same.

Ranade was optimistic about the final issue of the human struggle waged on the Indian soil, and his optimism was based not on the general weakness of humanity which leads to wishful thinking but on correct analysis of deeper historical forces. It is, however, most characteristic of Ranade that his call to duty was in no way dependent on the final result of the battle.² Because a struggle has to be carried on against odds, that is no reason why it should be abandoned.³ 'The effort to hold your own and to resist the onslaught of the powers of evil is itself a tonic to the nation.' It may not produce immediate results, but it is bound to improve those who undertake it, and after all it is improvement that matters. Even in such fields as industrial progress the superiority of our competitors ought not to stun us into inaction.⁴ By learning our own strong and weak points we must make the best of our strength, while trying to overcome our weakness.

When the contact with advanced nations like England has brought home to us the possibility of a free and progressive life, it is the duty of every citizen to work for the realisation of this end with such means as are either open or congenial to him. The deep religiosity of Ranade's outlook on life made him almost impatient with those who were simply apathetic.⁵

2. We may fail, or even miscarry, but the effort will do us incalculable good, and the very failure will serve as a warning. This is the law of all progress, and we can claim no exemption from it.—(M. 236).

3. It is no doubt a struggle of a very unequal character, a struggle between a giant and a dwarf, and yet the struggle has to be maintained against great odds; and those who are engaged in the struggle cannot do better than note, from time to time, whether the direction of the movement is correct and its velocity satisfactory.—(E. 95).

4. This is the practical work which Providence has set down for us to learn under the best of teachers. We have already made fair progress. We have to improve our raw materials or import them; when our soil is unsuited to their production. We have to organise labour and capital by co-operation and import freely foreign skill and machinery till we learn our lessons properly and need no help. We have rusticated too long; we have now to turn our apt hands to new work and bend our muscles to sturdier and honester labour. This is the civic virtue we have to learn, and according as we learn it or spurn it, we shall win or lose in the contest.—(E.-113-114).

5. Apathy, he always said, was our greatest curse in those days. Wrong opinions he could stand; misdirected activity he could stand; but apathy filled him with deep sadness that he found harder to overcome.—(G. 777).

The life of improving opportunities that modern civilisation renders possible is neither for the indifferent nor for the lethargic. A constant sense of responsibility, co-operation and industry is an indispensable quality to any one who cares for freedom and progress.

Mr. Ranade had such a keen appreciation of the role played by an improved system of economic organisation in bringing about the establishment and progress of a modern state that he exhorted his countrymen to look upon industrial progress as an appointed task. Even the contemporaries of Ranade could not have foreseen how true was the observation and how unerring the remedies indicated by him. In this task political or religious differences were to count as nothing. In improving your own position you were helping to improve that of the community at large. The ultimate industrial progress to be attained by the transformation in the system of production would indeed be dependent on the natural resources that were available to us. But we could certainly make the best of our resources so that our poverty may be mitigated, our national economic strength built up and our political status enhanced. The economic foundations of national progress were thus better appreciated by Ranade than by any other publicist of his generation or of the next.

Even in the sphere of industrial reform Ranade urged how futile it was to despair of work only because ideal circumstances were not available. The state may not be as sympathetic as it should be, there may not be enough ready capital forthcoming, labour may be less than normally efficient. But for all these defects of the situation the remedy was not inaction and grouse but forging ahead with such means as were available. Besides an attempt to improve conditions as much as possible, we must make the best of our available resources along lines indicated by our objective—this was a cardinal tenet of Ranade's creed of action.⁶ The tenor of his own life so

6. What we have chiefly to avoid is the pursuit of impracticable objects.

Having realised this situation, we must strive to correct it with a full sense that we cannot do all that we wish in a single year or a decade, and that we can at the most create the spirit and the tendency, and initiate the movement of change and set it afloat.—(E. 185).

closely conformed to this exhortation that all who cared to work in association with him had no alternative but to try their best to follow him in this respect. It is obvious that this rule of practical conduct was intended to apply to a much wider sphere than that of economic progress which Ranade had immediately before him when he first uttered the thought.

That difficulties are a challenge to the human spirit of enterprise and achievement, and therefore the creation of this spirit is a fundamental necessity, was fully realised by Ranade. He was not deterred by failures or disappointed by small results, so long as every step helped to create the spirit of progress and achievement. Progress achieved by a slow process of absorption tended to produce a lasting effect. That indeed according to Ranade was the special genius of Indian society. But to prevent slowness from degenerating into sluggishness, and conservatism into inertia, it was of the utmost importance to keep bright the fire of progress and the urge to achievement.⁷ There is nothing like practical work to keep these things alive and hence Ranade was exceptionally tolerant of the theoretical shortcomings of practical workers in the cause of progress.

Ranade was a devout traditionalist in the sense that he recognised the inevitable influence of tradition and surrounding on the most revolutionary of thinkers and reformers.⁸ As

7. That goal is not any particular advantage to be gained in power and wealth. It is represented by the efforts to attain it, the expansion and the evolution of the heart and the mind, which will make us stronger and braver, purer and truer men. This is at least the lesson I draw from our more recent history of the past thousand years, and if those centuries have rolled away to no purpose over our heads, our cause is no doubt hopeless beyond cure.—(M. 227-228).

8. You may talk and act in a way that appears to be the result of your voluntary efforts, but you are unconsciously influenced by the traditions in which you are born, by the surroundings in which you are brought up, by the very milk which you have drunk from your mother's breasts or influenced by those things in the world which you cannot disown. To say that it is possible to build up a new fabric on new lines without any help from the past is to say that I am self-born and my father and grandfather need not have troubled for me. That is the way in which things strike me at least. (M. 158).

nobody is self-born nobody is entirely free from inherited and environmental influences. Such an exemption would be both unnatural and undesirable. A new ideal can last only in so far as it arises out of the existing experience.⁹ People can be expected to be able to work out the ideal only in the way in which with their existing needs and resources they can do so. In a purely speculative manner there were no limits to Ranade's idealism. But as a creed of practical action he would in any given context of time and place adopt only that part of the ideal which could be realised with the help of the real.

For any striking progress either in our economic or political life Ranade felt the urgent need of securing three advantages which unfortunately the country lacked. At the very outset there was the great need for unification. Castes, sub-castes and religion, provincial and historical associations—these play so decisive a part in our normal reactions to any idea of the situation that a collective and objective view is extremely rare. Such a mental attitude, however, is essential for political as well as economic progress. All movements that aim at binding the individual to a group, binding small groups to big ones, binding one community to another, bringing people of one religion into common contact with others received the best appreciation and support of Ranade. Unification¹⁰ on a national scale was his

9. I believe no man cherished more lovingly and reverently the past of this land than Mr. Ranade. "We could not," as he once declared, "break with the past, if we would. We must not break with it if we could." But he was not content to live simply wrapped up in the past. To him, the present and the future of the country were of more pressing importance than the past, and while a study of the past sustained us in our struggle, and furnished guidance for our work, by reminding us of the limitations imposed by the laws of historical unity of growth and pointing out the deficiencies in our character and development which had to be supplied, the main interest of life was represented by the extent to which the duties of the present were performed and the ground for the future prepared.—(G. 788-9).

10. If the guiding hand of God in history has so favoured us hitherto, why should we despair now when we have been brought under influences of a still more elevating kind? The old Testament testifies to the truth and benignity of the promise of the New Gospel. It is the Gospel which teaches us the supreme duty of unification, in place of dissension. It teaches us by example and precept the supreme virtue of organization and self-reliance. It holds before us a brighter ideal of the dignity of the individual soul, the image of the God in us. It seeks to bridge the chasm we otherwise would have been unable to span by our own unaided efforts, and holds out a hope of a more hopeful future than we have ever enjoyed in the past. (M. 125-126).

ideal. It had to be worked for in as many fields and on as many levels as was possible.

Unification had to be realised both on the large as well as on the small scale. A habit to act together where interests are common has to grow. This is a matter of slow growth. Short cuts to unity are impossible and in fact dangerous. This is being realised in a larger measure by all of us to-day than ever before. Ranade's path of slow but sure action was indeed the best. A very great help towards realising wider unity is offered by the capacity to see the good that is in others. Very few people have this high attribute of character. But many can practise this method if it is calculated to promote their interest. Ranade felt that even in this latter respect we in India did not show as much elasticity and eclectic capacity as are desirable in any progressive people. To act together we must learn to think together, but this is not possible until we cultivate the habit of toleration and appreciation of the good points in others. No mere philosophical exhortation is enough in this regard. Our daily actions have to be practised in pursuance of such a deliberate policy of realising our progress by the widest possible unity based on common interest.¹¹

Only one trait of Indian character threw an occasional shadow on the otherwise undarkened optimism of Ranade. He felt both by reference to recorded history as by contemporary experience that there is something that repels an Indian from a life of sustained¹² exertion. Occasional flashes of enthusiasm,

11. This weakness of internal dissensions is an ever-present danger in all times and phases of Indian history. It has been happily described as the tendency to be unorganised and centrifugal, to resent discipline and subordination. No wonder that such unorganized power cannot maintain itself against organised force or skill arrayed against it, in the battle-field or in the Council Hall.—(R. 54).

12. Work was to him the one condition of national elevation, and having fulfilled it so gloriously in his own case, it was not possible for his mind to be weighed down by thoughts of despondency. About twelve years ago, in speaking of the Social Conference and of its unpopularity, I once ventured to ask him what it was that sustained his faith in the Conference work, seeing that some of the best friends of social reform shook their heads, and said that nothing was to be achieved by such hollow work as holding meetings and passing resolutions. Mr. Ranade turned to me and said, "Wait for a few years. I see a time coming, when they will ask the same question about the Congress, which, at present, evokes so much enthusiasm. There is something in the race which is unequal to the strain of sustained exertion".—(G. 779).

bravery and sacrifice can be expected from almost all Indians. There will always be a few Indians—we know Ranade was one of them—who may live a whole life of sustained, even dedicated, service. But the rank and file of the people easily lose enthusiasm and are averse to disciplined industrious existence. Whether it is the result of the climate, or of traditional ideas or of breeding is immaterial. All these have to yield to a determined desire to achieve freedom and progress. The strength of these existing drawbacks gives us an idea of the measure in which by practical conduct counteracting influences have to be developed. Under a suitable social and educational regime Ranade hoped that the necessary qualities of sustained organised effort will be built up, though on rare occasions he had his own doubts. Whether Ranade's penetrating insight, or only an occasional misgiving on his part, was responsible for this hesitation is for later generations to prove by their own conduct and achievement. Experience since the days of Ranade in several fields of activity has already done much to strengthen our hopes in a bright future for our country.

CHAPTER III

SOCIAL REFORM

"The change which we should all seek is thus a change from constraint to freedom, from credulity to faith, from status to contract, from authority to reason, from unorganised to organised life, from bigotry to toleration, from blind fatalism to a sense of human dignity. This is what I understand by social evolution, both for individuals and societies in this country." (M. 116-17).

To many who had only a very vague idea of the work of Ranade as a political thinker or as an economist his contribution to activities in the field of social reform was always a tangible achievement. That some of his most intimate co-workers felt that Ranade's title to greatness consisted in his desire and activity for reform is made evident from an extract from a speech of the late Rao Bahadur Joshi reproduced on an earlier page. Even if we were to look at Ranade's activity in this field in isolation it would rank as one of the most penetrating and constructive efforts. As a matter of fact, Ranade's vision of social reform was so sweeping as to cover all the aspects of human progress, and he held that unless social reform in its widest sense was brought about, no other channels of progress, such as political and economic, could be successfully pursued. To know all the deeper implications and the ultimate objectives of the Ranade school it is essential to make a reliable acquaintance with his views on social reform.

✓The most obvious features of Indian life, now as during the days of Ranade, were its poverty and dependence. In a land subject to foreign government it is easy to attribute both these evils to alien rule. Ranade himself was a persistent critic of the economic and political policy of the British Government in India. [Nor did he feel that the social backwardness of the Indian people supplied an excuse for the indifference and inactivity of the state.] ✓All the same, he had a firm conviction that unless the forces of intellectual and social freedom were fully released the high water-mark of the potentialities of Indian

progress will not be realised. Ranade's vision of the future goal of Indian progress was, as has been noted, a very lofty one. This high destiny the Indian people would not be able to achieve unless all the forces of rational self-expression were brought to the service of the nation.

That the mind and personality of man are one unified force and that its exaltation as well as its degradation make themselves felt in all the aspects of human activity were truths which Ranade had firmly grasped. Hence as a national reformer he necessarily extended his interest to all branches of constructive reform. In a characteristically lucid passage in his writings, Mr. Ranade observes:—

"You shall live by the sweat of your brow, is not the curse pronounced on man, but the very condition of his existence and growth. Whether in the political, or social or religious, or commercial or manufacturing or aesthetical spheres, in literature, in science, in art, in war, in peace, it is the individual and collective man who has to develop his powers by his own exertions in conquering the difficulties in his way... You cannot have a good social system when you find yourself low in the scale of political rights, nor can you be fit to exercise political rights and privileges unless your social system is based on reason and justice. You cannot have a good economical system when your social arrangements are imperfect. If your religious ideals are low and grovelling, you cannot succeed in social, economical or political spheres. The interdependence is not an accident, but is the law of nature." (M. 231-32)

How religious, social, economic and political aspects of progress were for Ranade intermixed as in an organic whole is obvious from this extract. Anybody who is concerned with the rebirth of a mighty nation cannot afford to have a less comprehensive idea of his own task. This much is clear from the examples of national progress all the world over. What is remarkable about Ranade is his capacity to work with different groups of fellow-workers in the several fields noted above. What was clear to Ranade as a single process of regeneration

appeared to many earnest people of his own times as mainly a political or a social or a religious problem. While neglecting no opportunity to emphasise the inherent unity of the effort at reform, Ranade did not neglect to appreciate the earnestness shown by individual workers for particular items of his whole scheme. More important than the particular reform in hand was the collective effect on the life of the nation. So long as the particular act of improvement fitted well with the general scheme, Ranade was not in the habit of quarrelling with the general ideological views or other programmes of action of his co-workers. This is one of the secrets of the almost universal influence for good exercised by Ranade over all the public workers of his day.

In this connection two famous controversies of Ranade's times might be referred to with advantage. In retrospect one of the two at any rate is bound to appear to be very paltry. In those days the number of public workers was small and the occasions on which they could conveniently meet one another were not so many as they now are. It was, therefore, thought to be convenient to hold a social conference at the same time as the National Congress. For no more ostentatious purpose than the convenience of meeting, it was suggested at the Poona session of the Congress, to hold the Social Conference in the pandal erected primarily for the purpose of the Congress. Indeed for several years before the Poona session, both the gatherings were, as a matter of fact, being held in one and the same pandal. The Social Conference as a rule was held after the proceedings of the Congress had been brought to an end. The orthodox party in Poona, some amongst whom were strong Congressmen, objected to this practice and they carried on a very strenuous agitation in support of their views. Ranade naturally desired the continuance of the old practice, both as a matter of convenience and as an outward mark of the internal unity of all the efforts at national progress.

The differences created among local workers on this apparently minor issue, however, reached such a stage of acrimony that all friends of the Congress desired a peaceful solution of the difficulty. As Ranade was no mere party or local leader, everybody looked to him with anxious interest for a suitable

lead. Ranade, disappointed though he was, magnificently rose to the occasion. He referred the matter to the constituent committees of the Congress, who by a large majority voted for the continuance of the practice of meeting in the same place. Having thus proved that the proposal to hold a social conference in the Congress pandal had the backing not only of precedent but also of authorised opinion, Mr. Ranade, as the secretary of the conference, declared that in the peculiar circumstances created in Poona he did not desire to proceed with the proposal.

In coming to this conclusion Ranade must have been seriously influenced not only by the expression of local opinion but also by the desire for a peaceful session communicated by many a Congressman outside Poona.¹ In agreeing to depart from the old practice for the sake of peace and unity, Ranade exhibited his well-known capacity for compromise and his keen desire to keep together those who agree for a higher common purpose and to have other platforms for causes which may attract smaller bodies of supporters. Even this is a very helpful trait in a leader of reform. But the prophetic vision of Ranade and his exalted national outlook were unmistakably proved even to his opponents for the time being by the interpretation that Ranade himself offered for the rather unexpected heat generated in Poona over a matter that had passed unnoted in many other provincial cities. As this statement of Ranade throws good light on his peculiarly popular and missionary view of the role of a reformer a more than usually full extract would, it is hoped, prove helpful :—

“While the rest of India has shown a good deal of prudence and wisdom, why is it that we were not able to show that wisdom, and moderation of temper, which we naturally claim the right to command? I confess I am not at all satisfied with the explanation

1. (An extract from the Honourable Babu Surendra Nath Banerjee's letter was read in the meeting which was as follows :—“The *raison d'être* for excluding social questions from our deliberations is that if we were to take up such questions it might lead to serious differences ultimately culminating in a schism, and it is a matter of the first importance that we should prevent a split. The request of the other side is very unreasonable; but we have sometimes to submit to unreasonable demands to avert greater evils.”)—(M. 152-153).

usually offered. There must be something deeper which we must study...There are various methods of working out social reform questions adopted in different parts of the country...If you go to Bengal, you will find there that the religious (theistic) development has taken up and absorbed all the more serious men who think about these matters, and they strengthen and grow into a separate section....So far as the orthodox community is concerned, Bengal is more orthodox than any other part of India. So far as the reformed community is concerned, Bengal is more reformed than any other part of India. They form in fact two separate camps...What the Brahmo Samaj has done in Bengal, the Arya Samaj has been attempting to do for the people of the Punjab with greater advantages...The Arya Samaj is a religious organisation based upon a social superstructure into which a few people here and there find their resort, and the rest of the community slowly gets itself more and more hidebound...The peculiar feature of the movement in the presidency (Bombay) is that we want to work on no single line, but to work on all lines together and above all not to break with the past and cease all connection with our society...If we were to follow any one method our quarrels would cease. If we were distinctly prepared to stand in a camp of our own leaving the whole community to do what they liked we might be at peace; for this is exactly what our friends the reactionist and the orthodox community are desiring us to do...I hope I have satisfied you that it is not mere personal differences or party quarrels or anything of that sort that explains the situation, but it is our systematic attempt to do the thing not on one definite line, which has intensified the conflict. We are not disposed to follow any one method to the end, and we apply a number of methods to a number of problems, and we do desire above all not to occupy a separate camp for ourselves. This is in my opinion the chief reason why there has been

so much misunderstanding and such exhibition of temper, and when you add to that personal and private differences, you will understand why the unfortunate opposition which was not offered elsewhere was exhibited in this beloved city of ours." (M. 159-60)

It is difficult to say, in the light of the long and acrimonious quarrels that had preceded the speech, what to admire most: Ranade's capacity to read deeper meanings in passing events or his magnanimity in rationalising the acts of his opponents. It is undoubted that though the peculiarly active flare of personal and factious politics of Poona and the Deccan had a good deal to answer for in the situation then created, Ranade's own position in the matter of social reform is best brought out by his expression of views at the critical hour. The whole moral of the situation was, according to Ranade, simply this. He did not desire reform simply for the individual. This could be done by pledges to follow a new code. Nor did he desire a better social life only for the select few. This would mean the establishment of a new caste. He desired to produce a favourable effect on the mind of the whole community and in practice to move only so much forward as was possible without losing contact with the main mass of society. This meant slow progress and continuous and acrid quarrels with all the reactionary forces. But in the long run this method has more than justified itself by the remarkable mass movement in all aspects of social reform that has taken place in the Deccan.

At any rate to the ordinary observer, not gifted with the historian's or prophet's insight, this was a trivial and mostly a local controversy. The other controversy, to which it is intended to allude in this place, appeared in its right proportions even to those who were taking part in it in Ranade's own days. While various features of Indian society, such as rigid caste rules, child marriage, dependence of woman, etc. appeared to most educated Indians as deserving of major modifications, some amongst them were far more impressed by the political problem of subjection to foreign rule. They felt that not only was the loss of political freedom a greater disability than, say, narrow

orthodoxy or unjust or out-of-date social restrictions, but also that unless political authority was won the road to social reform was far from clear. Even now this view of the situation is taken by many publicists, about whose patriotism no doubt can be entertained. The limits of social reform are now extending from the personal to the economic and institutional spheres. But the difference in outlook still remains significant. Have we to wait till political reform is complete to push on with reforms prompted by humanity and social justice ?

To this question the answer of Ranade was characteristically thorough and practical. A pious man of religion as he was, humane social reform did make a more elemental appeal to him. Even political power was meant for promoting social justice and welfare, and Ranade would be the last to sacrifice the end to the means, or the substance to the shadow. But even on the plane of cool calculation Ranade felt that the several walks of human life and thought were so irrevocably interdependent that it is both impracticable and ruinous to try and secure progress in one direction while deliberately neglecting the others. His views are best expressed in an extract given earlier in this chapter. While Ranade would not lose his own sense of proportion by pitting social against political reform for the pride of place, equally well he would not countenance an attitude of complacency with regard to social injustice or misery on the score of pre-occupation with the more pressing political problems. One is inevitably reminded in this connection of the vivid and urgent emphasis placed by Mr. Gandhi on what he calls constructive work, both as a foundation and bulwark for the more spectacular and exciting political activity. What distinguished Ranade from Gandhi was the practical statesmanship of the former in agreeing to maintain different platforms for different kinds of reforming activity. Even for the lasting success of the constructive programme such a separation is essential. In trying to mix up, on a platform of practical action, mutually incompatible elements, the cohesion in the ranks of workers as also the sincerity and success of their efforts are bound to suffer. Both the similarity and difference between the Ranade and Gandhian schools of reform are very significant and instructive.

To divide the ranks of political workers on account of their differences as regards social questions of a relatively narrower application, was as shortsighted as to create differences among social reformers because of their political opinions. The habit to unite in support of common interests or programmes has been less evident in our behaviour than that of creating artificial differences and forming exclusive groups. Exclusiveness based on a rigid adherence to some code of faith and behaviour is the foundation and the bane of the caste system. By introducing such exclusiveness in politics we are pandering to an undesirable trait in our past tradition and standing in the way of that association for common objects which is the very foundation of concerted action in a democracy. Association is helpful to progress only if it recognises the manysidedness of human opinion, thought and interest. If it tends to produce a rigid subscription to dogmas it does more to divide than to unite. This is a matter in which the Ranade creed of working with all who agree with you in a given sphere of action, irrespective of other differences, is the best suited to the early realisation of a liberal and democratic regime in India.

As a close student of Indian history Ranade profoundly disagreed with the view^a that Indian society is on its way to

2. Our European critics are more wise in their generation, and some of the wisest among them have demonstrated to their own satisfaction that all oriental races have had their day and that nothing is now left to them but to vegetate and die, and make way for their betters. Political elevation, and social emancipation, religious or spiritual enlightenment,—these gifts have not been, and will never be, according to their philosophers, vouchsafed any more to the Indian races. If these black forebodings were really inspired prophecies, our outlook would be dark indeed. Happily for us these prophecies are not true, and what is more, it is in our power to falsify them. History does not countenance them, and the teachings of science are not in their favour. No earnest prayer, no self-denying aspiration, no sincere battling with falsehood and ignorance, can ever, under God's Providence, end in failure. The methods may have to be changed, but the struggle is ever the same, and none need despair. It is not the gains that you make outside of you, it is not what you have, but what you yourselves become, that makes or mars a man's or a nation's destiny. Particular reforms may be out of our reach or may not be for our advantage; but the earnest desire for reform, and sincere efforts of self-sacrifice directed towards their attainment cannot but elevate us above our weaknesses, and strengthen our strong points, and

(Continued on next page)

irrevocable decay or that the process of decay can be stayed only by an infiltration of foreign blood. On the contrary Ranade held that Indian culture has an exceptional capacity for adjustment. When it comes into contact with a new ideological or institutional force it tries by its innate conservatism to beat down the incoming influence. If the new influence survives the initial reception either because it is inherently powerful or because it derives peculiar strength from the special circumstances of the times, it is absorbed in Indian thought in such a manner as to fit in with the rest of its culture and practice. The old and the new continue to war with and absorb one another. A continuous flow of evolving culture is thus presented to us. In this lies our hope.

Such an interpretation of Indian history led Ranade not to inaction in the expectation that everything will work out as well as desired if only things are left to themselves. That would have been a way to perpetuate passivity and inertia in our society. The forces released by modern science and social organisation were according to Ranade traceable to two fundamental purposes. ✓ A sense of human dignity and a desire for freedom to work out one's own ideas of truth and justice were the twin ideas which have in modern times released the human mind for the constructive progress of mankind. If only the Indian people were to imbibe these two ideas as part of their nature Ranade did not worry for the rest. Once these ideas are assured, how you set to work was a matter of detail over which Ranade was always prepared to compromise. ✓

plant the banner of union in hearts torn with centuries of strife and disunion. This is the moral interest of the struggle, and those who cannot appreciate this invaluable privilege of fighting in the ranks in such a struggle are,— what shall I call them—superior persons living in a Paradise of their own. If indeed history and science both declared against us, we might find it necessary to pause. But the history of this great country is but a fairy tale, if it has not illustrated how each invasion from abroad has tended to serve as a discipline of the chosen race, and led to the gradual development of the nation to a higher ideal if not of actual facts, at least of potential capabilities. The nation has never been depressed beyond hope of recovery, but after a temporary submerging under the floods of foreign influences, has reared up its head, absorbing all that is best in the alien civilisation and polity and religions.—(M. 115-116).

Reform in the old ways, by absorption of the good elements in the new, was for Ranade the natural and the only possible method of progress in a healthy society. He had no patience either with the revolutionaries or the revivalists. Those who hark back to an imaginary golden period of past history and desire to revive the features of a past stage of our civilisation so as to meet the challenge of current forces of disorder and decay met with almost a crushing rejoinder from Ranade.

“ When we are asked to revive old institutions people are very vague as to the time that they have in view...What shall we revive ? Shall we revive the old habits of our people when the most sacred of our caste indulged in all the abominations as we now understand them of animal food and drink which exhausted every section of our country's zoology and botany ? The men and the Gods of those old days ate and drank forbidden things to excess in a way no revivalist will now venture to recommend. Shall we revive the twelve forms of sons, or eight forms of marriage, which included capture and recognised mixed and illegitimate intercourse ? Shall we revive the Niyoga system of procreating sons on our brother's wives when widowed ? Shall we revive the old liberties taken by the Rishis and by the wives of the Rishis with the marital tie ? Shall we revive the hecatoms of animals sacrificed from year's end to year's end, and in which human beings were not spared as propitiatory offerings ? Shall we revive the Shakti worship of the left hand with its indecencies and practical debaucheries ? Shall we revive the Sati and infanticide customs, or the flinging of living men into the rivers, or over rocks, or hook-swinging, or the crushing beneath Jagannath car ? Shall we revive the internecine wars of the Brahmins and Kshatriyas, or the cruel persecution and degradation of the aboriginal population ? Shall we revive the custom of many husbands to one wife or of many wives to one husband ? Shall we require our Brahmins to cease to be landlords and gentlemen, and turn into

beggars and dependents upon the king as in olden days?...In a living organisation, as society is, no revival is possible. The dead and the buried or burnt, are dead, buried and burnt once for all, and the dead past cannot, therefore, be revived except by a reformation of the old materials into new organised beings. If revival is impossible, reformation is the only alternative open to sensible people." (M. 190-91).

Amidst the many discouraging features of the new regime of dependence and temporary decay Ranade spotted one vital saving feature. Howsoever ennobling and successful the earlier civilisations may have been, they were essentially confined to the select few. Aristocracy of birth, merit or wealth was inherent in the ideas and social structure of the olden days. Even Brahmanism, with its emphasis on knowledge, meditation and sacrifice touched a very small portion of the community.³ The apathy and stagnation of the other castes, especially of the masses, was appalling. No largescale and successful movement of national unification and progress would be possible with such a divided and unequal society. Especially the prospects of a general industrialisation of the community would be meagre where the individual mind was not freed from tradition either in thought or in habit. It is difficult to say what would have happened to Indian life and institutions if these had not been touched by Western influences. It is, however, almost certain that mediaevalism in thought and practice would not have crumbled as fast as it did under the new regime. For a large reformation a fresh contact with a new force of reconstruction was needed for all classes, creeds and communities. This was supplied by the new learning of the west and by the new industrial and social structure with which we became acquainted as a result of our new contacts.

As Ranade did not believe either in the possibility or advantage of a revival he did not support the idea of a root and

3. The fact is, that Brahmin civilisation, with all its poetry and philosophy, with strict rules of abstinence and purity, had hardly penetrated below the upper classes who constituted less than ten per cent. of the population.—(M. 204).

branch revolution.⁴ He knew the influence that environment and tradition have on determining our aptitudes. Only by engrafting the new on as much of the old as was suited to the new circumstances was peaceful and lasting progress possible. Whether it was the Brahmanic, Jain or Buddhistic system of social structure, the apathy and inertia begotten by a long regime of authoritarianism were their inevitable outcome. The main objective of social reform, therefore, was so to broaden the sphere of free thought and action of the individual as to enable him to think, to feel and to act for himself.⁵ So far as it was possible to indicate the lines of this liberalising movement Ranade tried to do so in a passage, which we have given at the head of this chapter. In place of constraint created either by prejudice, tradition or social custom Ranade wanted freedom. A fresh, independent and questioning attitude was so rare among us in Ranade's days, and in fact, is so rare even now, that it must be placed at the very top of all objectives of social reform. Human reason may be, as it is like all human things, an imperfect instrument to knowledge and action. All the same it is through human knowledge and choice that the emancipation and advancement either for the individual or for the society is to come. The importance of understanding and choice is crucial to the morality of human existence. Freedom to learn and to do must be offered by the social system and the people must be

4. You may talk and act in a way that appears to be the result of your voluntary efforts, but you are unconsciously influenced by the traditions in which you are born, by the surroundings in which you are brought up, by the very milk which you have drunk from your mother's breasts or influenced by those things in the world which you cannot disown. To say that it is possible to build up a new fabric on new lines without any help from the past is to say that I am self-born and my father and grand-father need not have troubled for me. That is the way in which things strike me at least.—(M. 158).

5. Superimposed laws will not do service to us unless as in some extreme cases the surgeon has to be sent for to stop hemorrhage and allow the physician time to heal the patient. This work of liberation must be the work of our own hands, each one working of himself for his own release. It is in this spirit that the work has been carried on during the last thirty years and more.—(M. 208).

trained to take advantage of such freedom.⁶ Neither in the political nor in the economic sphere is a movement along modern lines possible unless a rationalisation and enfranchising of the intellect is secured.⁷ Reformation, renaissance and progress are closely interconnected; but intellectual freedom is the common foundation for all the three. ✓

✓ A questioning attitude towards accepted truths and practices not only helps in keeping up their purity and usefulness but it also secures the dignity of the human mind in knowing and voluntarily accepting the conditions of its being. However, it follows from this that freedom to question is followed by a responsibility to believe what has been proved. Credulity indeed has no place in a self-respecting and self-reliant order of human existence. But if with credulity were to go either the desire or the capacity to believe, the whole intellectual, moral and material structure of human civilisation would tumble to pieces, and humanity would be thrown back into the dark ages of barbarity. Faith in human reason as the least unreliable of guides is, or at any rate ought to be a cardinal feature of civilisation. Ranade desired to wage war against credulity. He did not want to undermine faith. If only reformers of other days were to keep up this distinction there would not be such a large mass of disintegration as accompanies most movements for reform.

✓ The whole of the mediaeval order was based on status. Whether in European feudalism or in the Hindu caste system the idea was to fix each human being right from his birth into a previously determined niche of the social system. For certain purposes such an arrangement was natural and advantageous for the individual as well as the society. But with peace assured by large national states and with science available for industrial, use the old institution of status became a hindrance to progress

6. The new mould of thought on this head must be, as stated above, cast on the lines of fraternity, a capacity to expand outwards, and to make more cohesive inwards the bonds of fellowship. Increase the circle of your friends and associates, slowly and cautiously if you will, but the tendency must be towards a general recognition of the essential equality between man and man. It will beget sympathy and power. It will strengthen your own hands, by the sense that you have numbers with you, and not against you or as you foolishly imagine, below you.—(M. 193).

no less than to real stability. In the new order each individual, in his as also in the community's interest, had to be permitted to bring to the service of the group what he thought was his best contribution, and to receive in return from the community a fund of advantages proportional to the value placed on his contribution. ✓ The community was in final analysis the individuals themselves and thus by exchanging the best possible contributions of all the individuals on a basis of fair exchange each was offered an opportunity to gain the highest possible advantage to which he was entitled by the merit and industry of his effort. ✓ In essence, and very often in form, this was a contractual relationship as contrasted with status so characteristic of the older regime. ✓

' While status sacrifices abundance and progress to security and stability, contract sacrifices unity and social justice to freedom and technical improvement. Out of utter lack of freedom the first step was towards putting the relationship among individuals and classes on the basis of free choice. Ranade was, however, conscious of the two fold danger of an unchecked support of a contractual interpretation of society. Firstly the organic unity of society is of a greater order of material and moral worth than technical progress or opulence. Hence only so much emphasis can be justifiably laid on contract as is not inconsistent with social unity. In the second place the beneficence of the principle of contract presupposes the justice and spontaneity of the initial positions of the bargaining parties. As a matter of fact owing to several social institutions such as caste, property and inheritance, these preliminary conditions are not in all cases satisfied. Hence contract as a plank in the platform of reform has to take its place by the side of other equally important objectives such as equality of opportunity. This reconciliation would be one of the objects of social organisation. ✓

It may be stated as a paradox that the regime of status could do with the least amount of organisation, while the individualistic regime inaugurated the era of highly organised social life. In the earlier stages of industrialism the emphasis lay on the withdrawal of public organisation and its replacement by private mechanisms of ordered relationship. It was soon

realised, however, that the implications of the social processes involved in the change were so fundamental that the supreme co-ordination and guidance of all organisations affecting the well-being of society must be taken over by the state itself. European and especially English thinkers were not so ready to recognise the justice and inevitability of this conclusion as they should have been. Ranade, however, had a just appreciation of the roles to be played by individual freedom and organised guidance in the new structure of society rendered necessary by the exigencies of political as well as economic progress.

Organisation on a higher plane of free choice and purposeful action depended on a changed mental outlook. Bigotry, religious, intellectual and political, has been a characteristic feature of all stationary and stagnant societies. Generations of people having been brought up on the inherited faith that whatever is, is for the best, change itself becomes anathema. Anybody who shuns change shies at a difference, and by a reflex action of the fear of change, becomes intolerant of any difference. On the other hand when you place understanding above belief you are ready to understand the other man's viewpoint. Dogma gives place to free discussion and fanaticism is replaced by toleration. Toleration and freedom are indeed two of the inestimable possessions of civilised man, and in working for the realisation of these as part and parcel of Indian social reform Ranade was not only striving to better the lot of his own countrymen but was acting as an instrument of the progress of human civilisation as a whole.

A regime of status is sustained and prolonged much beyond its normal period of utility by the spirit of fatalism that it breeds during its decadent days. The habit of looking upon existing arrangements as beneficent is too deep-rooted to be easily shaken by the contrary evidence of experience. In such a situation of contrast between faith and experience the mass mind in a stationary society finds support in the theory of divine ordination. It is more than probable that this natural reaction is actively nursed by persons who benefit under the existing regime. Fatalism is thus the worst outcome of a decadent human society, and no regeneration is ever possible for.

the individual and the community until they have learnt that their doing and undoing are both caused mainly by their own acts, and that it is not only possible but even obligatory that every human being should under all circumstances try to understand and improve his situation according to his best light. This sense of human dignity and freedom was indicated by Ranade as the main spring of the reformation to which he had dedicated his life, and out of which he hoped that a free and prosperous India would arise. Against the pervading gloom of fatalism so characteristic of his days it took more than ordinary courage and insight to preach the new light. It is abundantly clear that both as prophet and as reformer Ranade was fully equal to the task that had thus devolved on him.

✓ That the individual must be freed and instructed to be an instrument of his own all-round betterment was a thesis which was fundamental to Ranade's ideas about the trend of future structure of Indian society. He was equally insistent on turning the Indian mind to a greater appreciation of the fruits of material progress. Materialism as contrasted with spiritualism may or may not be a lower ideal. But passivity and stagnation were undoubtedly the worst possible state. In a healthy and vigorous social structure a man must not only be free to live a life according to his own ideas but he must also have the means to do so. The acquisition of material means to live a desirable life was an objective of social and individual action during the days of Aryan colonisation. But during later times the tone of Indian life was one of apathy and indifference to the material arts and industries. The pursuit of knowledge in the vedic days extended to physical as also to metaphysical phenomena. But in more degenerate days it came to be a mark of superior wisdom to renounce things and to turn away even from knowing them. Whatever moral worth there was in abandoning what one has, or what one was capable of acquiring, was lost when the very productivity of the nation's economic effort began to suffer on account of lack of enterprise. Even for the fulfilment of a higher moral ideal the building up of a more vigorous and productive industrial structure was a necessary feature.

It is a very characteristic feature of Ranade's thought on the subject of a desirable life for a progressive community that he included the arts and sciences as necessary parts of social activity. An advancement in these spheres was as legitimate a part of higher civilisation as developed moral purpose. In fact any real development in the moral sphere would be unattainable for the community except it be based on the strength of the progress of science and arts. Ranade desired very fervently that the mass mind of the Indians and especially of those amongst them who have better means and leisure should be turned towards this side of national reform.

Free social institutions, developed industry and purposeful social co-operation were for Ranade the foundations of a free and prosperous Indian life. His approach to social reconstruction was thus an all-sided one. The particular reforms that he urged in the Hindu society in his days were only minor efforts at giving effect to the whole plan. It was inevitable that the caste system should attract Ranade's close attention. On two points Ranade was deeply resolved: one, that our conquest by the foreigners was mainly due to the social exclusiveness⁷ bred by the caste system, and the second that the origin of the caste system lay in the earlier conquest of this country by the colonising Aryans. Later developments of history not only rendered ineffective the political foundations of the caste system, but they actually emphasised the need of closing the ranks of all Indians in their effort to promote their own freedom and well-being. About the extent and manner of the modifications in the caste structure Ranade, as was his wont, was prepared to recognise all reasonable

7. Now what have been the inward forms or ideas which have been hastening our decline during the past three thousand years? These ideas may be briefly set forth as isolation, submission to outward force or power more than to the voice of the inward conscience, perception of fictitious differences between men and men due to heredity and birth, passive acquiescence in evil or wrong doing, and a general indifference to secular well-being, almost bordering upon fatalism. These have been the root ideas of our ancient social system. They have as their natural result led to the existing family arrangements where the woman is entirely subordinated to the man and the lower castes to the higher castes, to the length of depriving men of their natural respect for humanity.—(M. 192).

compromise. But on the main thesis that as a foundation for economic, social and political organisation of the Indian community the caste system had long outlived its utility, and was in fact now operating as a hindrance he would not accept any contravention. Needless to say he deplored most of all the degenerate state to which the 'untouchables'⁸ had been driven by centuries of rule of the higher castes.

The caste system had been a cornerstone of the social structure for such a long time that the depressed classes themselves were brought up on a belief that their own and the community's interest lay in perpetuating their lowly state. It is true that under the influence of new ideas and new circumstances some discerning and courageous members of the depressed sections had commenced to agitate for their own betterment. But those of the more fortunate sections who realise the limitations and the mischief of the existing arrangements ought not to wait for the degraded to demand their own release⁹. In the interest of social justice no more than in the ultimate interest of all classes efforts at social reform ought to be directed towards achieving as equal a possession of freedom and means as possible.

The caste system, including its most degenerate form of physical untouchability, was obviously a principle of the organisation of society as a whole. In the days of the earlier governments it had also the sanction of the state behind it. How far the indigenous governments were influenced by interested counsels in upholding caste restrictions and how far they were guided by the normal bias of all governments to back the status

8. Shall we not be more considerate to those whom we have hitherto treated as if their very touch was pollution, and help them in rising higher, or shall we say to them, "Do not stand near and cast your shadow on us"; will the inner man in each one of us grow stronger, braver and more charitable and humane by reason of our resolve in one way and not in the other? (M. 211).

9. A third way of stating the same objection is that the parties who suffer do not complain of it, and strangers have therefore no business to intervene. This is a very old line of defence. It was urged as an argument against the abolition of slavery as well as against the laws which rendered Sati and Infanticide crimes, and validated widow marriages. Perhaps the worst effect of injustice is that it depresses the down-trodden victims to such an extent that they lick the hand of the oppressor.—(M.-79).

quo it is very difficult to say. Wherever the government was influenced either by the will of a single inspiring hero like Sivajee, or by the decisions of popular assemblies like the panchayets, the practical disadvantages of the caste system were considerably minimised. But in the new political and economic structure ushered in by the British, the caste had no relevance, and hence the policy of the British Government was to level down the high, and occasionally to level up the low. It was left for the Hindu society only to absorb the social and personal consequences of the indifference of the new government towards the privileges of caste.

Even here in such matters as entry into temples or access to places of public convenience the British Government tried to uphold local custom, as they thought that it was best to govern the Indian people in such matters according to their own ideas of right and wrong. The limitations and injustice of this policy were apparent in due course, but it was not till very recently that the question of legal remedies for caste grievances arose as a burning topic of the day. In Ranade's times the refusal by the state to admit caste exclusiveness in its own arrangements was held to be enough encouragement and sanction for the movement of caste abolition that gradually began to gather strength.

Other aspects of Indian, and especially Hindu, organisation were not so detached from the normal functioning of the machinery of law. Prevention of widow remarriage among caste Hindus and prevalence of child marriages almost in all communities are instances in point. More closely connected with the sanctioning authority of the state were property and inheritance laws. None of these practices or customs had ever been stationary. Under the influence of changed circumstances and altered views they were always undergoing a slow transformation. This was possible when local groups of religious and secular authorities were free to think over their own solutions to their particular problems and to apply these without fear of opposition. When all secular authority came to be vested in the agents of a foreign government and when religious merit came to be identified with unchanging conservatism this old elasticity of social practices was no longer feasible. All

the same natural dissatisfaction with existing arrangements and practices in several spheres was accumulating, and the question as to the proper means to bring about a change in the sanctioned practice began to agitate the mind of all sections of Indian, and especially Hindu, society.

Ranade's views on this subject were typical of his unwillingness to trust to any one method of achieving a desired object. To begin with, he would try his utmost to convince the common people of the justice and need of the proposed reform. In doing this he would try as far as possible to prove that the desired change was not only advantageous in itself, but that it really amounted to going back to older and more beneficent arrangements than the existing ones¹⁰. Such an appeal, wherever

10. This is another of those misconceptions for which there seems to be no excuse except a false pride, which makes us cherish dangerous delusions. As a matter of fact, the social arrangements at present are admittedly not those for which we can plead the sanction of the great law-givers whose names we revere in lip worship, but whose behests we disobey at every step. Most of the customs which we now profess to follow run counter to the practices observed in the old times when the institutes were written. The dependent status of women, the customary limits of the age of marriage, the prohibition of marriage to widows in the higher castes, the exclusive confinement of marriage to one's own division of the sub-castes into which the country has been split up, the ignorance and seclusion of women, the appropriation of particular castes to particular professions, the prohibition of foreign travel, the inequalities made by the licence enjoyed by men and the abstentions enforced on women, the jealous isolation in matters of social intercourse as regards food, and even touch, indiscriminate charity to certain castes, for all these and many more alienations from the old standards, you cannot hold the old law-giver responsible. They are the work of human hands, concessions made to weakness, abuses substituted for the old healthier regulations. They were advisedly made by men whose names are not known to our ancient history. They are interpolations made to bolster up the changes introduced about the times when the country had already gone from bad to worse. They were innovations for which no sanction can be pleaded. It may be, they were made with the best intentions. Admittedly they have failed to carry out these good intentions, if any, then entertained; and in seeking to upset them, and restore the more healthy ideals, they were superseded. The reformers of the present day are certainly not open to the charge that they are handling roughly with time-honoured institutions. It is rather for the reformers to take their stand as defenders of these ancient ordinances and denounce those who have set God's law at defiance to suit their own purposes.—(M. 233-234).

it was possible, was calculated not only to minimise opposition but also to extend the benefit of the change. A study of the old scriptures and traditional histories was thus indicated as a useful accessory even to the social reformer. On such subjects as female education, child marriage and widow remarriage an appeal to older times and authorities was often found to be very useful. Both because he was a man of the people and also because he knew how to advance by the line of least resistance, Ranade ever tried to fit in all new reforms as far as possible within the framework of an older practice.¹¹ Thus like the British constitution he could always say about Indian society that it constantly changes without ever appearing to do so.

Wherever this method was inapplicable on account of the merits of the case Ranade was not deterred from preaching and working for revolutionary reform. An institution like untouchability or sati, for instance, has to be rooted out whether with or without an appeal to older texts. Our present needs and ideas are the real tests of the usefulness and validity of proposed reforms. It is a matter of suitable method to initiate the change in the shape of a revival. But where revival is not compatible with our needs as ascertained by the leaders of the community a new practice has to be initiated. Such breaks with the past were frequent in older times and Ranade was not deterred from doing in his own generation what earlier sages had done in theirs. Where tinkering would not suffice he was prepared to go in for drastic, almost surgical, treatment¹². He would not insist on treating surgically what might be cured, though more slowly, by a medical treatment. This latter

11. As prudent men, the question for us will be, shall we float with this current or resist it? As these influences are providential our duty is clear, and this duty becomes more pleasant when we find that in so acting, we are not only obeying God's law, but also returning to the ways of our forefathers, overstepping the obstacles put by our fathers in the way.—(M.235).

12. The diseased corruptions of the body cannot, and should not, be dealt with in the same way as its normal and healthy developments. The sharp surgical operation, and not the homeopathic infinitesimally small pill, is the proper remedy for the first class of disorders, and the analogy holds good in the diseases of the body politic, as well as the material body as also in dealing with the parasitical growth of social degeneration.—(M. 81).

course he thought suited the temper of the patient better. But if it came to choosing between tolerating the continuance of a disease and removing it by surgical operation he would be the first to take up the knife. ✓

✓ Having decided in his own mind that a particular change was both desirable and necessary Ranade would try to recommend it to popular acceptance as a very orthodox revival. If on account of the change being really a drastic departure willing popular support could not be secured on the scale on which it is necessary to have it for the universal acceptance of a new practice, Ranade would use the agency of the state to legalise the change. Such an attitude of friendliness towards the agency of the state in bringing about social reform became the object of twofold criticism in Ranade's times. ✓ First of all there were those among the Indians themselves who held that social arrangements were the private concern of the Indian communities themselves and a foreign government should not be approached for initiating and authorising a change in established practice. Ranade profoundly disagreed with this view. ✓

He felt that the foreign character of government made no difference as long as the initiative for reform came from the leaders of the community concerned.¹³ In fact recognition by the state of a changed standard of right and wrong adopted by a community was in keeping with the tradition in India. The thinkers and reformers ought to satisfy themselves that what they are suggesting is undoubtedly the right and the necessary thing to do, and that they are carrying the better mind of the community with them. In such matters the whole or even a majority of the mass of the people can hardly be won over before reform is actually initiated. Those who are opposed to a reform or are indifferent to it are often converted to the new faith by practical experience. It is in this faith that the

13. In such matters, the distinction of foreign and domestic rulers is a distinction without a difference. It has a meaning and significance when foreign interests override native interests, but when the foreigners have no interest to serve, and the initiative is to be all our own, the recognition of state help is not open to the stock objection urged by those who think that we forfeit our independence by seeking such regulation on lines approved by us.—(M. 80).

reformers have to act and in seeking legislative sanction to their proposals they are only utilising a normal social instrument of validating group standards. ✓ One can also argue, as Ranade did, that many of the existing practices are upheld and sanctioned by the existing law based on custom and tradition. If a change is desired in the practice the law also has got to be changed. If a modification is desired in a lawful practice it can hardly be possible without changing the law. All the same, excepting cases of elemental humanity such as sati or infanticide, which have got to be prevented by civilised government even in defiance of the prejudices of a people, Ranade would not appeal to the legislature unless the better mind of a community itself desired a change. Law supplements and authorises reform; it is no substitute for rational and voluntary conversion. ✓

From another quarter opposition was offered to Ranade's readiness to call for state legislation in support of social reform. As will be clearer from some of the later contents of this work the theory of non-interference was carried to its excess by the nineteenth century English philosophers. Beyond maintaining law and order the state was not to interest itself in any of the affairs of its citizens. The actual behaviour of the English state never really conformed to this prescription. But it was a good excuse for inactivity, here and in England, when policy dictated that course. ✓ Ranade held that theoretically there ought to be no limits to the competence of the state. { To promote the welfare of the individual and the society by as many means as are suitable is the legitimate purpose of state activity. Especially is it necessary that the state should interfere to protect those who cannot protect themselves, either against physical or social or economic injustice. ✓ The sympathies of all good men either Indian or non-Indian were on the side of reform, and experience gathered since Ranade's days proves to the hilt that in denying to ourselves the instrument of state action we act in a most suicidal fashion. ✓ Even law cannot and ought not to work in contradiction of the community's scale of good and evil. But the law must ever strengthen the forces of good and chastise those of evil. It is for the better mind of the community for each time to lead the state on the path of reform. ✓

How comprehensive was Ranade's idea of social reform and how he desired to set about its realisation is best illustrated by the following extract from a speech of his:—

“There are two schools of thinkers among those who have discussed this subject (social reform). One set would utilise all the active and passive agencies which tend to encourage and vitalise reform, the other set would leave things to take their own course, firm in the confidence that the passive agencies at work would secure all our ends just as we desire, slowly but surely. ✓ Those who feel the full force of the ethical and political causes mentioned above (internal dissensions, upheaval of non-Aryan races, predominance of Scythian and Mahomedan rulers), and also feel how necessary it is at certain stages of man's progress to secure the assertion of right ideas by the highest sanctions, advocate to some extent the help of state regulation, as representing the highest and the most disinterested wisdom of the times, working to give effect to the other tendencies, concentrating and popularising them. Those who are not sufficiently alive to these considerations would trust to education and the gradual development of better ideas by their own internal force, to achieve all that we desire.” ✓ (M. 77)

The relative importance of particular fields and aspects of social reform may be a matter of dispute among the reformers themselves. But as regards the ultimate objective of all social reform and the manner in which it is to be realised, both experience and reasoning support the views of Ranade. To free each individual to think out his best life and to equip him with the means to live the same must be the goal of all social reform. Justice and equality must be the watchwords of our social arrangements. Wherever existing arrangements offend against these principles, without overwhelming cause of social importance being adduced in their support, the need of reforms is indicated. In bringing about this reform all legitimate means from voluntary convention to state coercion have to be used. State coercion must, however, be used only as a support to private action in popularising reform. Since Ranade's days the sphere of social reform has extended to the political and economic fields, but the underlying principles of freedom and equality are the same. ✓

CHAPTER IV

INDIAN POLITICAL ECONOMY

✓ “If in politics and social science, time and place and circumstances, the endowments and aptitudes of men, their habits and customs, their laws and institutions, and their previous history, have to be taken into account, it must be strange indeed that, in the economic aspect of our life, one set of general principles should hold good everywhere for all time and place, and for all stages of civilisation.” ✓
[E. 4]

Ranade's address devoted to the enunciation of the main outlines of what he called Indian political economy was delivered fifty years ago. The mass of economic literature produced by Indian scholars and publicists has gone on increasing year by year during this period. A large portion of this output refers naturally to the problems of the day and throws little light on the theoretical tenets of the science of economics. Either in the course of such debate, or separately, discussions on theoretical topics have often been undertaken. It will, however, be too much to claim even today that any Indian scholar has contributed something material to the development of the economic science as a whole.

This state of things is, undoubtedly, due to the ill-developed nature of Indian economy itself. The pre-occupation of almost all students with the political or public aspect of economic problems is also in a large measure responsible for the limited progress made by independent economic thought in India. These limitations which are obvious today must have been even more potent in the days of Ranade. An attempt at rationalising, in general terms, the whole complex of economic experience in India has yet to be made. Until the business life of the people is considerably advanced on the path of capitalistic industry and until the responsibility for chalking out economic policies is placed on the Indians themselves, it is not possible that a genuine school of economics will be established in India. In the meanwhile, several individual

aspects of economic theory as applied to experience elsewhere are being intensively worked on by some Indian scholars. It is, however, doubtful whether in the absence of a genuine stimulus in the shape of experience a real development of an analytical school can be expected.

In this respect, then, we have not advanced much since the days of Ranade. We are provoked to study economic science by the needs of our experience. These needs are essentially industrial but in the Indian context they assume a much more political colour than they do elsewhere. This is no doubt due to the nature of India's government—foreign, insensitive and unresponsive. Whatever the problem in hand may be, its examination at the hands of Indian scholars leads them to make suggestions most of which, for reasons best known to themselves, the supreme government fails to adopt. Occasionally they deign to advance theoretical arguments in support of their attitude, which it is necessary to meet if the superior validity of proposed measures is to be established. ✓ To a large extent, therefore, economic thought in India consists of reasoning offered in support of particular policies affecting the state or the public and as a criticism of the rival views. ✓ This, indeed, is neither an accident nor in itself a regrettable circumstance.

Apart from abstract and hypothetical hair-splitting the main justification for economic studies lies in the help they give understanding our economic situation and finding means of improving the same. Such an inquiry is no less academic, if indeed it is not more so, than abstract hair-splitting. The abstract and so-called theoretical economics is often too hypothetical to be helpful. Ranade's attempt at viewing the Indian economic situation in its proper context and perspective led to a revelation which is a commonplace of economic thought at present but was not so readily accepted then. That economic doctrines are reasonable explanations of economic experience and that they depend for their validity on the character of that experience is almost a truism, and is the very foundation of the relativity of economic thought that is now widely accepted. It was not so in Ranade's days, and even now under a more or less thin garb the so-called school of pure economics manages to be too pure to be soiled by facts, and thus hides the futility of its reasoning.

In spite of a fully busy career Ranade was led to outline a new orientation of economic thought on account of three things. Firstly, there was the inconsistency, or what Ranade calls 'a curious change of front,' of which the British administrators in India and their more learned protagonists were guilty. None was more insistent upon the relative truth of political theories than these expositors of British policy in India. Free political institutions were not considered to be suitable for the Indian people, but a free, that is to say, an unregulated and indifferent, economic regime was thought to be good for India because it was theoretically proved to be good and because it was demonstrably good for contemporary England. Even this adherence to a free economic system was not, however, honestly or consistently carried out. Foreign enterprises, such as the railway companies, were encouraged to undertake construction of railway lines under a system of guaranteed interest, a principle which was not extended to other even more important fields of Indian industrialisation. While sanctity of property and freedom of contract were looked upon as basic institutions of a free regime the state claimed to be the owner of all land, relegating all private possessors to the status of holders. ✓

This inconsistency was not the outcome of a deliberate act of disingenuous thinking. At any rate Ranade did not take it to be such. The obvious inconsistency was the inevitable sequel to a conflict between inherited regard for the universality of economic truths and the almost irresistible pressure of the facts of experience. It was therefore necessary to challenge the notion of universality and immutability of economic laws. In doing this no new ground was being covered so far as the challenge was concerned. But the incentive in this case came from a feeling of exasperation at the paralysis of state action in the face of important economic problems, which seemed to follow in the wake of a faith in the universal beneficence of classical economic tenets. The obvious inconsistency between the political and the economic policies of the Government of India, and even within the economic sphere between policies affecting Indian and British interests, was really due to a failure on the part of the Government of India to recognise the legitimate claims of India as an economic unit. Ranade was

thus led to condemn both the inconsistency and the rigid doctrine of which the former was in part a result.

In this task of inquiry, discussion and denunciation Ranade noticed the prominent fact that conditions in India were much more similar to recent and contemporary events in many of the continental countries, prominently Germany, than to those in England.¹ England was the first to industrialise its economy. This gave it a great advantage over its competitors. Secondly, England was politically and militarily supreme during the critical period of the transformation of its industrial structure, internal and external. The governmental system of Great Britain was during its period of economic transition sufficiently responsive to the opinion of the new interests that were developing. It is a matter of common knowledge that the new middle-class and labour interests had to fight their way to political recognition during the nineteenth century. But the main structure of parliamentary government, laid down during the Hanoverian period and substantially broadened in 1832, ensured a ready adjustment between state policy and national needs. To add to all political, economic and constitutional advantages, there was the saving trait of English character—a sound practical sense which throughout English experience has always risen above doctrine and dogma.

All these conditions were wanting both in India and in the countries of the European continent, though the latter were much better situated in respect of political power than India was. If, therefore, we were to adopt theories of progress from the experience of foreign nations the continental model was far more relevant than the English one. In point of time also the continental experience of economic transition was much nearer Indian needs than the English one. As Ranade here felt the need of challenging English classical doctrines along with inapplicable English methods, continental writers, as indeed later English writers themselves, had to do the same. A thorough study of

1. On the continent of Europe, however, Indian problems are fairly reproduced with Indian conditions of life and property, and the lessons to be derived from the study of continental economy have a more practical bearing than the maxims contained in the usual text-books of English Political Economy.—(E. 39-40).

Indian needs and conditions, of English doctrines and history, and of continental theories and practices led Ranade to adopt certain viewpoints of theoretical approach and practical policy which are not only characteristic of his own work, but have given to the study of Economics in India some special attributes.

The work of the greatest economist is for the most part but a systematisation and restatement of a mass of old ideas in the fresh context of contemporary experience and needs. Ranade had no occasion to write a treatise on Political Economy, and hence his contributions to the discussion of theoretical subjects have to be culled from his writings on problems of Indian economy. These statements, however, are all parts of a well thought out scheme of economic reasoning. As can be easily shown, Ranade had benefited by the most advanced thought in the field of economics and social policy, and he had, in the light of special Indian conditions, adapted foreign theories and experiments to a plan of understanding and action which is serviceable even today. These peculiarities of Ranade's thought on the subject of political economy have given a special colour to the thought of the main body of economic writers in India. There is in this sense a school of economics in India, quite apart from the writings on problems of Indian Economics. Perhaps there is not much that is original in the Indian school of political economy. The importance of originality in this respect can be easily exaggerated. But the eclectic adoption and adaptation of doctrines and practices gives enough cohesion and uniqueness to Indian Political Economy, of which Ranade undoubtedly was the founder. His contemporaries and predecessors had discussed economic topics, but none of them had attempted to present all the problems of India against the background of a fresh theoretical scheme. But, as has been observed in an earlier chapter, it was an almost irrepressible instinct of Ranade to connect particular actions to general theories. We owe to this trait of Ranade's mind the birth of Indian political economy.

Ranade, like Adam Smith, was a believer in nature. That the spontaneous reaction of the individual and collective mind to the circumstantial environment has a greater basis of truth than any *a priori* statements about the nature of things was a

cardinal belief of Ranade. It is well-known that Smith differed in his concept of naturalism from the Physiocrats^a before him and from Ricardo who followed him. The Physiocrats believed that the state of nature was a happy by gone age of free individual action and that it can be re-established only by the withdrawal of all authority and restrictions. The central authority of the King should be used only for the purpose of ensuring perfect mutual non-interference. Ricardo had no such historical prepossession in favour of an assumed state of nature. But he thought that economic activity tends to work itself out most successfully by leaving each economic agent free to shift for himself. Hence the best economic policy was to leave people to themselves.

This was neither Smith's nor Ranade's position. That the spontaneity of human action is an indication of its natural adaptation to circumstances and needs would be accepted by both of them as a general proposition. But they would include in the list of spontaneous economic reactions the readiness of man to think out collective methods of economic activity. Collective action was for them no less spontaneous than individual. According to the circumstances of each case individual, associated or collective action was to be considered desirable. Smith showed more concern for the influence of institutions on economic life than either the Physiocrats or Ricardo. And Ranade was fully convinced that we can study the economic activity of a people only against the background of their social institutions.

The difference between the viewpoints of the prevailing British school and Ranade lay not only in connection with the role of the state in economic life. It started from the more fundamental issue as to the nature of economic laws. Even for communities in whose surroundings a doctrine is developed Ranade would say that an economic law was always conditioned by the continued existence of the assumed circumstances. In

2. Physiocrats were the first declared economists. They hailed from France, and flourished as a school during the second and third quarters of the 18th century. The natural order, i.e., the state of things which would be restored when all human restrictions are withdrawn, was according to them the providential and most beneficent order.

individual cases these circumstances may not obtain and then the law would be invalidated. What is more to the point, in a changing economy the rule would be that circumstances would change; that they would not change would be the exception. Economic laws having to explain constantly changing phenomena on the strength, very often, of very incomplete data, are always very distant approaches to a fully reliable explanation. Hence it is always desirable to check every economic doctrine at every stage of its practical application by reference to experience. Where experience and doctrine conflict with one another the doctrine should be modified to suit experience, rather than trying to adjust experience to doctrine.

The final standard of truth in economic science is, therefore, not to be found in a rigid conformation to certain *a priori* truths. Nature itself, the spontaneous adjustment of activity and needs, must be considered to be the final standard. Our study of economic science should aim at as full a comprehension of this natural economic activity as possible. But as such a study can never be complete we must always be on our guard not to disregard the dictates of nature and experience simply because they conflict with our theoretical tenets. The latter are always on the defensive and, in a way, in the melting pot.

The attempt made by some latter-day economists to distinguish between the science of economics and economics as an art or the much more modern counterpart of this distinction, viz., pure and applied economics, would not have appealed to Ranade. There can be no science which does not fully explain reality. Where reality itself is incompletely comprehended either because it is changing or because we are not aware of all its implications, our generalisations about it cannot claim to be scientific if they depart from reality. A check by practical observation and application is such an integral part of economic study that the two aspects cannot be separately conceived as having either validity or usefulness. The two together will yield as near an approach to a comprehensive knowledge of facts as is humanly possible. The pose of certain modern economists of looking upon hypothetical and abstract economics as 'pure', is equally misleading. What they call pure is really

futile, as it is neither truthful nor useful. Observation of facts, generalisations based on these and their practical verification by experience is one whole complex of economic study to which we might give the name of the Science of Economics. In this sense it is a systematic study of economic facts. It is what Ranade called a science of national wealth.

Ranade was more impressed by the inherent hypotheticity of economic science than by its relativity. In a sense there is very little difference between these two terms. But the famous German author Frederick List,³ whose influence as a critic of the Classical school⁴ was great in Ranade's days, outlined a scheme of economic stages, for each of which an appropriate explanation of reality was to be offered. Even in the later historical school⁵ a belief in such a classification by stages is widespread. While Ranade was prepared to institute serviceable comparisons between countries with similar economic problems he would not subscribe to the doctrine of a common, continuous or compelling sequence of economic systems. The world of economic experience even in the field

3. It was the writings of List, which gave the fullest expression to this rebellion against the orthodox creed. He urged that the permanent interests of nations were not always in harmony with the present benefit of individuals. National well-being does not consist only in the creation of the highest quantity of wealth measured in exchange value, independently of all variety of quality in that wealth, but in the full and many-sided development of all productive powers. The nation's economic education is of far more importance than the present gain of its individual members, as represented by the quantity of wealth measured by its value in exchange. In a sound and normal condition, all the three departments of national activity must be fully developed.—(E. 19).

4. The Classical school of economists is the term used to denote doctrinaire English economists, of whom Ricardo (1772-1823) was the chief. They assumed that in his business conduct man was guided by the profit motive and hence free action of individuals in this field would redound to their own and the community's welfare.

5. The Historical school is the name given to a body of German scholars of the latter half of the 19th century. They believed that social life, and economic life as a part of it, was a process of continuous change. An analysis of static relations in any given context of time and place could not claim universal validity. By observing change we can only form generalisations which may be called laws of change. But even these would not be true of all times and places.

of economic change was too heterogeneous and too much under the influence of incalculable non-economic urges to lend itself to any such scheme. The idea of historical stages as a doctrine is no less abstract than the classical notion of an economic man.

In fact Ranade, like Smith⁶, would treat of economics as a branch of a wider science of society. In the hands of most English economists, it had become no more than an explanation and justification of the commercial practices of the British business community. Obviously this was too narrow a scope for a science to live on. Hence all over the academic world there was a movement to broaden the foundations of economic science and to bring it in close contact with realities. Ranade among Indian economists was the first to assume the leadership of the realistic and sociological approach to economic science. Since his day many Indian economists, mostly under the influence of prevailing English currents of thought, have tried to belittle the importance of hypotheticity and relativity. They have not even failed to assume as practical guides what their more cautious masters have described as only a pure doctrine. A neglect of the study of special Indian circumstances has also occasionally made its appearance in the writings of those who pride themselves on their superior academic lights. On the whole, however, the tradition of a realistic and sociological, or national, approach has been maintained by later economic writers in India.

While speaking of Ranade's sociological or national approach it must be made clear that Ranade looked at the nation primarily as a society or a group⁷ as distinguished from an individual. The latter was the object of all concern to the prevailing school of English economics with disastrous

6. Adam Smith never separated economical from social considerations, and thus occupied a position of advantage, which his successors gave up by their too absolute assertion of his doctrines.—(E. 16.)

7. Modern thought is veering to the conclusion that the individual and his interests are not the centre round which the theory should revolve, that the true centre is the body politic of which that individual is a member, and that collective defence and well-being, social education and discipline and the duties, and not merely the interests, of men, must be taken into account if the theory is not to be merely utopian.—(E. 20-21).

results both for individuals and nations. Ranade placed the group, the society or the nation, in its proper place in our economic reasoning. Ranade's nationalism was not directed against internationalism and the world order. What has been said about his views on religion in an earlier chapter would be enough to support a claim that Ranade's nationalism was not only consistent with, but was actually helpful for, the realisation of an international order. It was against the extreme individual anarchy and social indifference of the classical school that Ranade raised his voice to support the cause of social order and national progress. Without these latter, no world state would ever emerge.

In his economic behaviour man as a type does not always react in the same way. Not only are there very serious individual variations both of motive and capacity, but the influence exercised by national psychology and social institutions is almost decisive. These influences, individual as well as collective, vary from nation to nation, and hence extreme rigidity of doctrine is unsuitable to economic science. To assume one body of doctrine as immutable truth and to deduce from it rules for practical conduct without verification of factual circumstances is both unscientific and ruinous. The attempt on the part of English economists to assume certain conditions as existing in India because they were supposed to be verified by British experience and to prescribe methods for Indian application when only their English experience was known, fell in this category. In denouncing it Ranade has used strong but not exaggerated language. What he says only amounts to a claim that unless you know the peculiarities of the individuals and the group whose economic life you are studying you will neither understand the causes of their economic condition nor will you be able to prescribe a course of action for them.

In the following extract Ranade has set out the assumptions of the Classical school and he has proved how untrue they are in the Indian context. This disparity, however, is a universal feature and hence requires to be constantly kept in view by all students of the subject.

“It will be useful at this stage to note the general features of these assumptions of the earlier economists,

which they believed to be as necessarily and universally true as the first law of Mechanics, that bodies move in straight lines, or the first law of Physics, that they attract each other directly according to their mass, and inversely according to the square of their distance. These assumptions may be thus briefly stated:—(1) That national economy is essentially individualistic and has no separate collective aspect; (2) that the individual, or typical economical man, has no desire but that of promoting his own self-interest, or at least that this is his strongest motive power; (3) that this self-interest is best promoted by the largest production of wealth, i. e., articles with value in exchange, at the least trouble; (4) that such pursuit of private gain by each individual promotes best the general good; (5) that the free and unlimited competition of individuals in the race and struggle of life is the only safe and natural regulator; (6) that all customary and State regulation is an encroachment on natural liberty; (7) that every individual knows best his interest, and has the capacity and desire of acting according to his knowledge; (8) that there is perfect freedom and equality in the power of contract between individuals and individuals; (9) that capital and labour are always free and ready to move from one employment to another, where better remuneration is expected; (10) that there is a universal tendency of profits and wages to seek a common level; (11) that population tends to outstrip the means of subsistence; (12) and that demand and supply always tend mutually to adjust each other.

“ These assumptions lie at the root of all dogmatical treatment of the subject. It need not be said that they are literally true of no existing community. To the extent that they are approximately true of any state of society, the assumptions furnish valid explanations of its economical statics. Even then they furnish no suggestion as to its dynamical progress or development. As these assumptions do not absolutely hold

good of even the most advanced societies, it is obvious that in societies like ours, they are chiefly conspicuous by their absence. With us an average individual man is, to a large extent, the very antipodes of the economical man. The family and the caste are more powerful than the individual in determining his position in life. Self-interest in the shape of the desire of wealth is not absent, but it is not the only or principal motor. The pursuit of wealth is not the only ideal aimed at. There is neither the desire nor the aptitude for free and unlimited competition except within certain predetermined grooves and groups. Custom and State regulation are more powerful than competition, and status more decisive in its influence than contract. Neither capital nor labour is mobile, and enterprising and intelligent enough to shift from place to place. Wages and profit are fixed, and not elastic and responsive to change of circumstances. Population follows its own law, being cut down by disease and famine while production is almost stationary, the bumper harvest of one year being needed to provide against the uncertainties of alternate bad seasons. In a society so constituted, the tendencies assumed as axiomatic are not only inoperative but are actually deflected from their proper direction. You might as well talk of the tendency of mountains to be washed away into the sea or of the valleys to fill up, or of the sun to get cold, as reasons for our practical conduct within a measurable distance of time." (E. 8-10).

A more lucid and complete criticism of the Classical claims of universality and immutability of economic laws will be difficult to find. It will be observed that Ranade does not commit the mistake of going to the other extreme, as some members of the German school of Historical economists tended to do. Ranade admits that economic laws in the sense of statements of tendencies are not only possible but indispensable. The narrow foundation of observation on which is reared the claim for their truthfulness, however, ought always to make us anxious to watch for a change in circumstance and a corres-

ponding change in action. Ranade would urge not less study of economic theory because its truth is relative, but a more extensive and intensive study so that we might know all the shapes of economic truth and the laws of its relativity to economic circumstance. A wide study of economic history, growth of doctrine and schools of economic theory would thus be indispensable to any one claiming to follow Ranade's lead. His own Essays give an indication of the lines of study that he would have prescribed.

Two notions stand out as more prominent than the rest in Ranade's examination of the Classical economic science. The individual man appeared to the Economists as the centre of all economic experience. Not that they were unconcerned about national welfare. They simply assumed that group welfare was no more than a sum total of individual welfare. Hence if we took care to secure the best conditions of economic progress for the individual the rest would automatically follow. For such a supposition there was no warrant, and Ranade has no difficulty in establishing, by reference to Indian experience, that group organisations such as family and caste are far more powerful than the individual's independent motivation. Even as units of economic activity these and similar groups are a force to be counted with. Both for understanding the full implications of economic activity and for securing maximum welfare the collective life organised in widening groups culminating in the nation has to be kept in view. This the classical school and its followers among the class of British-Indian administrators refused to do.

Another feature of Classical economic thought which provoked strong criticism from Ranade was its assumption of change as abnormal. All their economics was at best a static analysis under ideal bargaining conditions. Such conditions are exceptional if indeed they are not altogether fictitious. Perfect freedom of exchange and movement is non-existing and changes in the technological, political, social and several other non-economic spheres so constantly change the economic situation that a description of the operation of economic forces under static conditions is rendered irrelevant. Periods of transition constantly recur and can be neglected only at grave

cost in physical and moral deterioration. Provision for mitigating the evils of constant transition cannot be adequately made by any private agency. Hence social action to regulate change and to counteract its evils becomes an imperative part of economic policy. Neither the economists nor the administrators were prepared to admit the justice of this policy in Ranade's days. Even now the bias of the prevailing English school of thought is not as ready to recognise the importance of state action in periods of change as it should be.

Adam Smith was indicating the possibility of economic valuations being outweighed by non-economic ones when he sanctioned the wisdom of British Navigation Laws by reference to the famous dictum, that defence is more important than opulence. Defence is one of the class of military objectives, and there are a number of other non-economic objectives for which a community may care more than for economic objectives. Unless we acquaint ourselves with the situation in this respect we are not in a position either to understand or to influence the economic situation. Moreover, the non-economic objectives are themselves not steady all the while. A host of economic and non-economic circumstances, efforts and objectives are inevitably mixed up in a situation which is constantly liable to change. It is the duty of an economist to study the economic implications of this complex and changing situation as fully as he may, and to suggest ways and means whereby the objectives of society can be most easily obtained. A comprehensive, sociological, dynamic and constructive view of economics was alone acceptable to Ranade as it was to Adam Smith before him.

As has been observed before, Ranade did not at any time attempt to write a whole treatise on economics. But his views on most of the branches of theoretical economics can be clearly grasped by a perusal of his writings. His ideas on the subject of the scope and significance of economic science have been discussed above. It was a natural corollary of these that Ranade felt thoroughly out of sympathy with the prejudice of English economists and administrators against state action in the economic sphere. He felt that there ought to be no theoretical limits to the action of the state even in the economic sphere and each proposal for its extension should be considered

from the standpoint of its practical effect in the given context. To the Indian government he even suggested the establishment of state factories for the manufacture of stores needed by government on a large scale. Such a course of action would not only help in popularising industrialisation but would mitigate the social evils of the capitalistic system. Capitalism itself was in a less advanced state when Ranade wrote, but it is remarkable that a state-initiated and regulated regime of industrialisation was envisaged by him as a suitable model for countries undergoing a late contact with modern methods of production.

In the sphere of distribution Ranade showed a keen historical perspective and a warm social sympathy.⁸ He did not believe that there was any finality about the existing scheme of distribution. Neither the institution of private property nor the social grooves in which property and privilege tend to be canalised have any inherent validity. All these are historical categories. They have come into being as the result of a social process for which there can be only one moral justification. That an institution or practice promotes social welfare and establishes social justice can be the only moral justification for its existence. Considerations of private right and convenience are always subject to public convenience and social need. In the matter, for instance, of curtailing the rights of landlords so that some interest may be created for the cultivating tenant, Ranade was prepared to modify the institution of private property by correlating it to function and social need. Even generally over the whole field of distribution of wealth Ranade felt that regulation and redistribution brought about with a view to secure greater equality and justice were not only permissible, but that these measures were absolutely essential if progress consistent with stability and justice was to be secured.

Being interested in the lot of the Indian tenant Ranade's attention was prominently drawn to all the theories connected with the sharing of the produce of agriculture. In the sphere

8. It is in this spirit that the distribution of produce among the needy many and the powerful few has to be arranged, i. e., in a spirit of equity and fair-play, and the orthodox views of finality in such matters must be reconsidered in all the relations of life.—(E. 31).

of rent the Ricardian theory then held the field. That rent is the reward of the original and indestructible properties of the soil; that it is not paid by the marginal land as the cost of production on that plot is just covered by the price realised for the produce; that rent is received by the owners of lands of superior productivity; these well-known and now well worn-out theories were most prevalent. That the theory of value underlying the Ricardian doctrine of rent is itself defective and that rent in the sense of a socially created unearned income is not confined to land were truths which were then confined only to the class of some advanced economists. The prevailing beliefs both among economists and administrators were based on the traditional tenets of the Ricardian theory of rent.

Ranade had no occasion to examine the whole Ricardian scheme of value and rent. But as it was claimed for the Indian land revenue that it did not bear heavily on the agricultural industry, he had to expose the underlying fallacy.⁹ That rent is not paid by the marginal land could not be a tenable proposition where the state claimed to be the sole landlord and exercised its monopolistic position to exact a high price for the use of land for cultivation. Not only had all land to pay rent but it was tending to be determined by the theory of monopoly rather than by that of competition. As the state with its manifold needs and its powers of taxation was in this case the monopolist, the price exacted tended to be heavy and impinged on the earnings of other factors of production such as interest and wages. While the purely differential aspect of the Ricardian theory was thus seen to be inconsistent with Indian experience, the unearned nature of rent implied in the Ricardian definition was also found to be pointless. A very

9. In the same way the Ricardian theory that economic rent does not enter as an element of price, admittedly does not apply when all occupied land has to pay monopoly rents to the State landlord. There is no competition among landlords in this country, for there is only one true landlord, and the so-called land tax is not a tax on rents proper, but frequently encroaches upon the profits and wages of the poor peasant, who has to submit perforce to a loss of status and accommodate himself to a lower standard of life as pressure increases.—(E. 29-30).

high turnover of landed property is the rule in India at any rate in modern times. Hence a large portion of the return from land is really a remuneration of capital, and hence a levy intended to fall on rent really tends to fall on the earnings of capital, or on those of the more needy partner in the agricultural industry, the cultivating tenant. For both these, rent is a part of cost and though its amount may vary by reference to the level of profits and prices, the fact of payment is in no way affected by the existence or otherwise of a remunerative price level. That rents are not purely differential, that they are paid by all business users of land, and that they enter into costs of production, were truths which Ranade established by reference to Indian experience and thus showed the weakness of the Ricardian theory, which even in later times has been used in justification of the existing arrangements regarding the distribution of rent and the payment of revenue.

In the days when Ranade developed his own economic thought the subject of economic policy in general and that of trade policy in particular was engaging the serious attention of people. In England enthusiasm for a free trade regime had begun to wane, though the mass prejudice bred of a successful half century of that regime was still inimical to any change in the traditional policy. The reaction in England was a reflection of the happenings on the continent and in the U. S. A.¹⁰ These countries after a short-lived initial attempt to follow the alleged freedom of English policy had set themselves to the task of guiding the course of their economic reorganisation in channels that were considered advantageous for the nation as a whole. Not only was free trade discarded in favour of fair and protected trade, but direct assistance to industry and encouragement of even an aggressive economic policy were becoming popular in non-English countries. Partly as a result of these steps and partly on account of the growing technical efficiency of foreign competition English thought was being redirected towards the goal of preserving British markets for British goods.

10. In this, as in other matters, the conditions of Indian life are more faithfully reproduced in some of the continental countries and in America than in happy England, proud of its position, strong in its insularity, and the home of the richest and busiest community in the modern industrial world.— (E. 33-34).

While the case for free trade was abandoned in almost all non-English countries and when a reorientation was visible in England itself the Government of India clung to its free trade professions. As is well-known, even these professions were not consistent with the practice of the Government of India in actively helping British trade and industry in the country. The academic teaching was all in favour of an unmitigated non-interference on the part of the state. Ranade accepted neither the theoretical policy of state inaction nor the steps taken by the Government of India in pursuance of what they considered to be the better theoretical policy. Ranade's criticism of the policy of the Government of India will be discussed in the next chapter. Here we are concerned with noting only the thoughts of Ranade on the subject of trade policy in general.

Popular versions of the Classical school as found in authors like Fawcett had turned the doctrine of Free Trade into a dogma. It was thought to be so axiomatic that good would follow from a state of no tariff, that even if a foreign state subsidised exports and thus caused ruin to your producers it was not thought to cause a change in the situation. This was not only inconsistent with what Ricardo, Mill and Smith had said in support of a policy of general economic freedom, but this was manifestly absurd. Freedom of trade was neither a panacea nor a tactical pose. It was supposed to be a condition in which the highest efficiency of production is expected to cause a most economical utilisation of the world's economic resources. Subsidised competition neither promoted efficiency nor did it lead to a profitable utilisation of total resources. Even on theoretical grounds freedom of trade in a market assailed by groups drawing their strength from non-economic sources was obviously unjustified.

When we look at the consequences that follow for a nation which is the victim of subsidised competition a whole set of new considerations are opened before us. The immediate loss to the exposed industry is only the beginning. Further repercussions for the same and other industries are bound to follow, especially when at further stages of the foreign aggression monopolistic influences begin to assert themselves. All these reactions cannot be left to be absorbed and counteracted by unguided

private effort. They are private neither in their origin nor in their consequences. An authority that can take a long and a comprehensive view of the nation's economy is alone competent to judge and to meet the situation. It thus follows that trade, and especially foreign trade, is a matter of great concern for the state. National interests affected both immediately and ultimately, have a claim for consideration at the hands of the state. In this particular case defensive tariffs would obviously be justified on the ground of unfair competition.

But once the principle of unfair competition is accepted as constituting an exception to the doctrine of free trade other possible forms of unfairness crop up in the mind. Subsidised competition is designed unfairness, but accident may as well cause a similar situation. The fact that one nation had an earlier start in its industrialisation would create a temporary situation of superior advantage for it over some other nations which may potentially be even more efficient producers. Thus both for the purpose of mitigating the immediate consequences of disturbances caused by an emergence of competitive rivals, as also to ensure maximum national and international economy, a watchful, protective and regulative policy is indicated on the premises and reasoning of the Classical school itself. Mill, like Adam Smith, was ready to recognise this.¹¹ Ranade used the authority of these greater masters against that of Fawcett and other contemporary writers.

11. Those who counsel non-interference in such matters on the authority of writers of Political Economy forget that political economy, as a hypothetical a priori science is one thing, while practical political economy as applied to the particular conditions of backward countries is a different thing altogether. American, Australian, and continental political economy, as applied practice, permits many departures from the a priori positions of the abstract science. If authority were wanted for this assertion, we could refer to Mill's Political Economy. The quotation is peculiarly appropriate as it lays down the duties of Government in countries circumstanced like India.

"A good Government will give all its aid in such a shape as to encourage and nurture any rudiments it may find of a spirit of individual exertion. It will be assiduous in removing obstacles and discouragements to voluntary enterprise, and in giving whatever facilities and whatever direction and guidance may be necessary. Its pecuniary means will be applied when practicable in aid of

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Ranade, however, was not inclined to stop merely at a palliative. He urged, somewhat on lines associated with the name of Frederick List, that the trade policy of a country cannot be considered in isolation. It must be a part and parcel of national economic policy. The incidents of the import and export trade of a country are less important than the movement of the productive system as a whole. Anything that promotes the economic education of the community, brings out its latent resources, material and human, and raises it in the scale of industrial progress is in itself economically advantageous. While the process is going on, the course of international trade may be so affected as not to make for a maximum turnover, or a most advantageous bargain. Cheapness and abundance arising out of foreign commerce may have to be abandoned so as to induce a development along a wider economic front. The consequences of national economic development are more to be desired even as economic objectives than temporary cheapness of imported materials and higher prices realised for exported goods.

Even if we go no further than economic objectives and calculations, several breaches are thus made in the Free Trade citadel. In almost all other countries the dogma had indeed already been abandoned. But here in India not only was Government manned by Englishmen who had their theoretical and practical notions based on out-of-date British experience, but even the academic thought on the subject was exotic and unprogressive. Ranade, like many other thinkers of the highest order, had enough appreciation of the fundamentals of organised human life to recognise that some values in certain contexts are higher than economic. To promote maximum social welfare it is necessary in such contexts to sacrifice resources to attain a more desired object than economic or technical

private efforts rather than in supersession of them, and it will call into play its machinery of rewards and honours to elicit such efforts."

"Government aid, when given merely in default of private enterprise, should be so given as to be, as far as possible, a course of education to people." Government must undertake to do "the things, which are made incumbent upon it by the helplessness of the public, in such a manner as shall tend not to increase and perpetuate, but correct this helplessness."—(E. 85-86).

efficiency. Smith had excepted defence. Other considerations such as stability, continuity, equality may and do count. Particularly when it is a matter of introducing the new industrial system in a society having its own ideas as to the relations among individuals and groups, and as to the things that matter in a successful human existence, the whole complex of new economic activities including foreign trade has to be attuned to the common national objective of the whole social process. Ranade refused to look at trade policy in isolation from other aspects of economic policy, and he was not content, even as an economist, to shut his eyes to the implications of the social and political transformation accompanying the economic transformation.

A comprehensive, purposeful and co-ordinated economic life was Ranade's objective. Hence Mercantilism made a more favourable impression on his mind than on the usual ruck of economic students in his days.¹² Some of the tenets and policies associated, rightly or wrongly, with that school, had indeed no justification and Ranade himself was ready to dissociate himself from these. That wealth consists in precious metals, that to get the largest possible stock of these should be the objective of foreign trade policy, and that this could be achieved by creating an export surplus by encouraging exports and discouraging imports were all well-known half-truths and fallacies which Ranade had no need to expose any further. He held, however,

12. It is too much the practice of text-writers to cry down this theory as one which confounded wealth with money and bullion, and made the possession of precious metals the test of national prosperity. This is, however, an utterly unfair and one-sided view of the subject. The leading feature of the system was that it set a higher value on commerce and manufactures than on agriculture, and on foreign over home trade. It encouraged exports, but desired to check imports with a view not to retain money so much as to develop home manufactures. Lastly, it prescribed the directive control of the State in the way of stimulating domestic manufactures and encouraging commerce. Each State competed with the rest in foreign markets, and sought to secure the most advantageous terms, and it sought also to extend its colonies and dependencies with a view to increase the sphere of open markets for its produce. It is enough to state that men like Colbert and Oliver Cromwell, Raleigh and Child, could not have encouraged a system which had not some solid justification in the then circumstances of Europe.—(E. 13).

on a very careful study of Mercantilist authors, that these alleged doctrines of the Mercantilists were less important in their scheme of economic policy, than certain other far-reaching propositions. With these latter Ranade had great sympathy.

The importance of manufacturing industry in enhancing the economic status and standard of life of a people was for the first time emphasised by the Mercantilists. To bring out the best possibilities of even the non-manufacturing pursuits the incentive of the demand set up directly and indirectly by the group of manufacturing industries is absolutely indispensable. The all-sided development of the creative skill of a people's industry is not possible until the manufacturing industries are considerably developed. This progress in skill, industry and enterprise is the fountain of all those virtues which make for the life of a successful and strong nation. Even the military importance of industrialisation can hardly be overrated. All these doctrines have such a modern ring about them that to-day the whole of economic thought may well be dubbed Neo-Mercantilist¹³. All credit to the sober section of the Mercantilists of old for having had the insight and the courage to express their support of an organised, purposeful and co-ordinated economic policy. No nation of modern times has reached its developed stage except by following this very policy. It is well-known that whatever the scholars and professors may have been saying at different times of England's growth, her statesmen and business-men have never been anything but Mercantilists. Even when they seemed to work for a regime of individualism, it was only for removing interference where experience had proved its injuriousness. The general policy has all along been that of a watchful and constructive lead on the part of the state. This is a very natural and healthy policy. Ranade believed that unless it is followed by the Government of India the task of modernising the economic, social and political life of the people would not be accomplished. It required not only an independence of thought, but

13. Speaking roughly, the province of State interference and control is practically being extended so as to restore the good points of the mercantile system without its absurdities.—(E. 31).

also a rare courage of conviction to say this when all authoritarian opinion, academic as well as governmental, was ranged on the opposite side. By the sheer force of conviction and courage Ranade asserted that principle of sociological and national approach to economics which has served as a foundation for the Indian school of Economics.

It has been stated above that Ranade was influenced in his thought by Frederick List's system of national political economy. Ranade was in agreement with the German school in respect of its criticism of the Classical claim of the universality of economic laws. He also saw eye to eye with List as to the guiding, protecting and co-ordinating role of the state in the economic, no less than the other spheres of organised human existence. In two respects, however, Ranade dissented from List's analysis of economic progress. Relativity according to List was mostly associated with the evolution of economic stages. A society was normally supposed to pass through a certain well-defined number of succeeding stages of economic organisation. For nations, in each one of these stages a common body of analytical and practical thought was supposed to apply. Ranade with his gaze not confined to a few West-European nations of modern times was able to see that there is a very much larger variety of economic situations than can be significantly classified into any scheme of stages. Nor is there any inevitability, or even naturalness, about a particular sequence of these stages. Economic life differs in essential respects from place to place and from time to time. That is the great truth that ought to make us more readily inclined to recognise relativity than any rigid system of stages enthroned in the place of classical universality.

In another very important respect Ranade differed from all the implications of the school of Frederick List. List believed that the natural division of labour brought by climatological and other physical factors must be taken as final. Hence, tropical countries should not aspire to developed industrialisation. As industrialisation is an important medium of modern culture and is indispensable for national defence, the denial of the validity of the claim to industrialisation involved a denial of the right to live a free life of cultured prosperity.

Obviously List was generalising from very incomplete observation as the classical school had done before him. Ranade was prompt in repudiating the implications even in the thought of the rival European school.

A glimpse into past history was enough to show that India, China and several other tropical countries had a highly developed system of manufactures. Not only the elementary industries of weaving and instrument-making, but highly advanced metallurgical and chemical industries were known to the Easterners. It was only the emergence of modern scientific thought in the West that made a big difference in the balance of advantages as between Eastern and European countries. Once the Easterners acquire scientific knowledge, far from being unsuited for industrialisation, they would be found to be the most advantageously situated for that purpose. Nearness to the sources of raw materials and to the selling markets, as also the abundance of labour power are far more natural and abiding advantages than the priority in acquiring scientific knowledge and industrial experience. These can be acquired by human organisation, and once this is done the more abiding natural advantages begin to assert themselves.

This has already been proved by the achievements of Japan which among Eastern nations is by no means the best off for natural industrial advantages. If countries like China and India were to be equipped with the fullest organisation for the pursuit of an industrial policy the results would be even more striking. Such a development, according to Ranade, would not only bring the blessings of a higher standard of life within reach of a large mass of humanity, but it would also stabilise the commercial relations among different countries. It was very risky for the Western nations to depend upon an ill-developed colonial empire or spheres of economic influence for the continued success and prosperity of their industries. Not only was there the constant danger of competition from the better situated countries lying overseas but the growing capacity of European industry was ill-matched with the poor and precarious earnings of the consuming markets. This disparity is a potent cause of the vicissitudes through which European industry has to pass. For a really natural and beneficent distribu-

tion of the world's economic resources it is necessary that all nations are allowed full scope for their economic development. Co-operation among such economically and politically developed nations will bring prosperity, peace and culture to the homes of the whole of God's creation.

As a student of economic science and of its growth Ranade spared no trouble to acquaint himself with all contemporary and past systems. He then chalked out a scheme for himself. In so far as his suggestions for Indian economic policy had a theoretical background it is to be found in this independent approach to all schools and their achievements. While ready to study and to adopt a theory, he would not believe or follow it if it is belied by experience. He would not leave the individual without the benefits of guidance and protection from the state which supplied the nerve centre as well as the power centre of the community. He would not isolate the abstract science of economics from an empirical art. He would study the whole complex of observation, generalisation and experience as one comprehensive and continuous whole. He would not presume anything so absurd as that man acts of his own volition free from social and institutional influences, or that even in respect of his business he is guided by the motive of acquisitiveness alone. Not unwilling to extend the sphere of state activity even to production, Ranade was keen to urge that the scheme of distribution must always be checked by considerations of social justice and convenience. No absolute right to private property or freedom can be said to exist. In fact eager as he was to encourage the fullest development of each individual according to his own aptitude, even for the widest realisation of this very objective, unchecked individualism according to him was an unnatural, wasteful and inadequate policy. Planned non-interference should indeed create for the individual a sphere of action wherein he may best help his own and his fellowmen's development. But the primary reality is the freedom, corporateness and vigour of the existence of the group. It is the group authority that is charged with the duty to secure these ends by such co-operative or isolated action as may be deemed suitable in each case. The natural and the desirable life for each society was one of such a co-ordinated,

planned and socially directed nature. To study the past, present and prospective movements of social life in the sphere of acquisition and utilisation of resources was the chief function of the economist. No narrower conception of the scope of Economics and no barren view of the functions of an economist would appeal to Ranade.

CHAPTER V

INDUSTRIALISE OR PERISH

“ Political ascendancy is not the only particular vantage ground which we have lost. Commercial and manufacturing predominance naturally transfers political ascendancy, and in this our collapse has been even far more complete. Of course, the situation is not hopeless, for no situation is ever hopeless to those who master its real significance and resolve to do their best to improve it.” (E. 180).

Deep as Ranade's interest was in the social and political problems of India he had the capacity not only to keep political controversy out of the field of economic reform but also to recognise the more fundamental importance of industrial progress. A varied and progressive industrial life has a very enlivening influence on the cultural progress of a nation. The resources that are necessary for living a life of independence and culture can be acquired only through an efficient and progressive industry. The problem of paucity of resources, in other words, the problem of Indian poverty, was according to Ranade the most fundamental. In helping to solve it we would not only be helping the cause of the political and social progress of India, but we would be realising the capacities for creative and intelligent self-expression of what amounts to a fifth of total humanity. The problem of Indian economy is thus fraught with the greatest interest both for us and for humanity at large.

Superficial explanations of Indian poverty' such as those

1. The question of our comparative improvement or decline under foreign rule is similarly a question of antiquarian history. The practical question for us all to lay to heart is not the relative but the absolute poverty and the present helplessness of the country generally. To a certain extent the historical discussion of the situation is instructive. There can be no doubt that whatever may have been our improvement in other respects, we have in recent times become more than ever dependent upon the single resource of agriculture, precarious and contingent as that resource is, upon influences we cannot control or count upon with certainty. The co-ordination of

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based on foreign exploitation of India did not suffice as adequate explanations. Ranade indeed tried his level best to secure a reduction in the element of tribute traceable in many items of expenditure of the Government of India. He had no doubt that every reduction in this sphere would help in easing the economic situation, both for the Government and the people of India. A purely Indian Government of India would no doubt be better able to organise all its activities in the national interest. To this end Ranade also worked for a movement by which power would be transferred to Indian hands. But approaching the subject of Indian poverty in a historical and objective fashion it appeared to Ranade that far more important than the political aspects of our economic life were certain deep-rooted features of our industrial structure. Unless these are properly attended to and suitably altered no amount of political reform would help to relieve our poverty.

In common with most other nations of antiquity India had in the past an almost exclusively agricultural economy. This is not to suggest that the people had no industrial skill, or that the needs for non-agricultural products felt by the people of the country were not satisfied by the industry of the artisan classes. But in the way in which agriculture was carried out, it took so much of the time of the people to produce for their maintenance that little surplus was left, either for transformation or for exchange. The industrial arts, though highly skilful in the imaginative and manual powers of the artisans, were practised on a small scale. The total output of agricultural and non-agricultural wealth always bordered on inadequacy. The dependence of agriculture, the main industry of the people, on the supply of water proceeding from a freakish monsoon made the economy further precarious. It was in this situation that a good deal of the psychological, social and political history of the people had its setting.

industries, which regulates the due proportions of men who plough the soil and raise raw produce, with those who manufacture this raw produce, and others still, who exchange and distribute it and the interplay of whose three-fold activities makes a nation thrive, was never a very strong factor of our collective social polity. We have been all along, like most ancient nations, more or less exclusively agricultural.—(E. 176-77).

Precarious and unprogressive as was the economy of the country in the static days of the pre-British regimes, it was not based on a system of exploitation. Occasional upheavals in the political sphere brought about a wholesale transfer of interests. This indeed was the chief disturbing factor that was dreaded by almost all classes in the older days. But during peaceful times the economy was organised on the principle of a recognition of all interests in society. In fact the organisation was comparable to the system of feudal days of Mediaeval Europe. On account of the large expanse of the country and frequent changes of political power in different parts, the rigidity and centralisation of control so characteristic of European feudalism never stuck root in India. But the principle of assured protection by a law of dependence was well recognised. As defence was the main concern of organised society every other aspect, such as the economic, came to depend on it. Rigidity of political relations was reflected in rigidity of economic organisation as well. Self-sufficiency, conservatism and customary regulation were the characteristic features of all social and economic life.

The traditional practices associated with castes, occupations and economic relations, were based on experience and were in many respects suited to peculiar local conditions. Unprogressiveness was, however, their chief defect. This did not matter so long as the contact between local economy and international exchange was either intermittent or was confined to transactions with nations which were even less progressive than India. Such was the state of things in ancient times, and in fact, till the Industrial Revolution in Great Britain disturbed the balance of technical advantage. Several questions of national and international politics were involved in an unraveling of the process by which change for the worse was induced in such balance among the several occupations as was customary in Indian economy.

That a contact with a technically more advanced nation is in itself a source of satisfaction and progress was readily admitted by Ranade. But such a contact has temporary effects

of a highly disturbing nature.² Unless these are carefully watched and suitably counteracted the weaker economy is so completely shattered in the period of transition as to be unable to benefit by any real advantages created by the contact. Total productivity is adversely affected and the interests involved are not only themselves lowered in the economic scale but bring down the whole economy to a low level. Quite apart from the transitional repercussions, which if unattended to tend to produce a permanent weakening, the real effect of contact with a technically superior nation is to be expected in a net increase in national production. Knowledge of better methods may create a possibility of reorganising the system of production. This transformation can be brought about either by private individuals or by the State.

If the state is alive to the implications and possibilities of the situation created by the new contacts it will create circumstances favourable to private parties utilising the new opportunities for their own and for national benefit. Tariffs are only one method of creating a temporary advantage. But the sense of security given by the knowledge of a sympathetic and watchful state policy is even more important in evoking the enterprise necessary to initiate the great economic transformation. If a state is sufficiently awake to the long-term social implications of the technological advances it might perhaps decide on undertaking industrial enterprise on its own initiative. Of these two alternatives the latter is by far the best if it could ensure efficiency and beneficent social purpose. Ranade felt that in India it was not only possible but even necessary that the state should play an active role in initiating

2. But our contact with the world outside, and the freedom of exchange which has resulted in consequence, have produced one most undesirable result. They have aggravated the situation by making us more than ever dependent upon a single and precarious resource. The industry and commerce of the country, such as it was, is passing out of our hands, and, except in the large Presidency towns, the country is fed, clothed, warmed, washed, lighted, helped, and comforted generally by a thousand arts and industries, in the manipulation of which its sons have every day a decreasing share.—(E. 177).

the change. The Government of India, partly under the influence of the prevailing theories of non-intervention and partly because of its failure to appreciate the implications of the exposed economic front from the Indian national standpoint, refused to accept any responsibility either for counteracting the inevitable repercussions of the change or for organising a constructive industrial programme.

Such a policy of indifference produced most disastrous consequences. The change in the economic sphere coincided with an unprecedented transformation in the government of the country. India was by no means unaccustomed to a foreign invasion and its consequence—a foreign government. But all of its past conquerors had settled in the country and had in a way been nationalised. The British remained foreigners even after their conquest and occupation of India. An international conflict of interests was thus inevitably developed. Ranade tried his best to impress upon the British rulers the great necessity of adopting an Indian national outlook in respect of its governmental responsibilities. It cannot be said that even with the Government of India, which was much more directly approachable to Indian criticism, he had any success in this venture of persuasion. But with the Government that really mattered, the Government of Great Britain which directed the affairs of India, he thoroughly failed to produce any impression. While the pressing claims of amelioration of distress caused by the transition and of systematic guidance of the new industrial activities were ignored, the process of industrial exploitation of the country by foreign capital was actively helped. The construction of railways without any regard to their economic consequence to numberless local industries was actually subsidised out of the tax-payer's money. International as also inter-regional markets developed so suddenly that almost all manufacturing industry was ruined. In sheer helplessness the displaced artisans turned to agriculture. Not only because of the inherently precarious character of Indian agriculture, but also on account of the indifferent qualities of the new tillage agriculture itself became a depressed industry. Ruralisation meant rustication and decay. A sense of defeatism, bewilderment and resignation came over the

people.³ In the closing years of the third quarter of the last century the prevailing note even among the better instructed was one of pessimism.

Ranade himself was a witness to this stage of Indian economic history. Very soon, however, he discerned rays of hope in certain new developments. The situation was materially affected by the incidents of the American Civil War. The disorganisation of existing trade connections with U. S. A. induced the British capitalists to look towards India for further economic expansion. This interest was partly responsible for the increased flow of Indian raw exports. Gradually, however, British and Indian capital began to be attracted by the possibilities of manufacturing industry. Simple manufacturing processes such as spinning and weaving began to be organised on a large scale as capitalistic industries using power and machinery. This transformation in industry was reflected in foreign trade as well. Writing in 1893 Ranade notes the peculiarities of this change in the following manner :—

“About twenty-five years ago, I had occasion to notice this collapse of domestic industries, and the gradual rustication of our chief occupations..., and it was about this time that a welcome change took place, whose effects are now perceptibly visible. Things were as bad as could be about 1870-75; since then the tide has turned, and India has shown signs of a revival which marks its first step in the transition from a purely agricultural into a partly manufacturing and trading country. Of course, no change has taken place in the absolute disproportion between the exports and imports of raw and manufactured produce, but their relative proportions have changed in a way which marks the beginning of this new departure from old traditions.” [E. 97-98].

3. Foreign competition, not because it is foreign, but because it is the competition of Nature's powers against man's labour—it is the competition of organised skill and science against ignorance and idleness—is transferring the monopoly not only of wealth, but what is more important, of skill, talent and activity to others.—(E. 177),

The facts about India's foreign trade which are referred to by Ranade are brought out in the following table taken from the same source. (E. 99).

	1879	1892	percentage increase	
			total	annual
	Rs.	Rs.		
Manufactured Imports	26 crores	36 crores	39	2.8
Raw Imports	14 „	26 „	91	6.5
Manufactured Exports	5 „	16 „	211	15.0
Raw Exports	60 „	86 „	43	3.0

“It will be seen,” says Ranade, “from this table that while the absolute disproportion still continues to be very marked, there is a very healthy change in their relative proportions.”

It was such a slow change working almost in defiance of state indifference and, in certain respects, even hostility that Ranade had to observe and guide. The apathy and helplessness of the masses, the conservatism and inexperience of businessmen, the lack of economic interest among the new educated classes and the misguided policy of the state were the formidable obstacles in the path of that industrial transformation of India which Ranade desired as an instrument of the all-sided renaissance of the Indian people. He was convinced of one thing: the Laissez-Faire policy would not help in overcoming these barriers. A gifted national leader such as a Colbert or a Peter the Great could alone appeal to the hope and imagination of a people and supply the unity and strength of effort that is involved in a rejuvenation affecting the whole life of the nation. Ranade had faith in leadership, but not in an authoritarian dictatorship. It was his observation of human history and of the course of western industrialisation that confirmed him in his attitude of opposition to a state of governmental indifference and social planlessness. He

was aware of the naturalness and beneficence of the twin foundations of a liberal economy, namely, private property and economic freedom. He favoured the widest possible extension of the right of assured possession of the fruits of one's labour as he knew that it was this sense of security and ownership that had almost a magic effect on the character and efficiency of a people. He could easily find a parallel in the transformation that took place in France⁴ immediately after the French revolution. A peasantry which before the revolution was noted for as great an apathy, improvidence and inefficiency as any other of those days, developed qualities of restraint, prudence and industry after the epochmaking event which stirred the very soul of the nation. By a comprehensive scheme of tenancy laws Ranade hoped to create assured interest in land for as big a part of the cultivators as possible. In essence the same policy of favouring private ownership, wherever social justice or welfare did not recommend a restriction, was recommended by Ranade for the possession of non-agricultural property.

Alongside of assured possession of the fruits of one's labour Ranade placed the freedom of each individual to develop personality and to express his own creativeness. Whether in the field of industry or of other branches of social life, most of the advance in human civilisation has been rendered possible by the irrepressible urge felt by the individual for self-expression. The whole tone of ancient and mediaeval civilisation was to suppress personality and to exalt the community. Ranade was not unmindful of the basic and co-ordinating role of the state. But within reasonable limits dictated by the needs of the appropriate functions of the state the widest possible freedom ought to be granted to individuals and their voluntary organisations. Regulation and

4. France is pre-eminently a country of peasant proprietors with small holdings like those of India, and its agricultural interest is of considerable importance. Of course, the French people are differentiated from our countrymen by their remarkable thrift, industry, and forethought, and their powers of organisation and mutual help. These habits are, however, essentially a creation of the change that took place in the early part of the century, when the estates of the nobles and the bishops and monasteries were escheated to the State and parcelled out among the peasant farmers.—(E. 49).

freedom, individual enterprise and collective direction were to work in mutual collaboration to secure the highest possible limit of welfare. Going back to a communally ordered society or imitating the *Laissez-Faire* organisation of the English textbooks, both these were undesirable alternatives.

In Ranade's scheme of social organisation the state would not only be a friend, philosopher and guide to all individual citizens and their organisations, but it would also be their mentor and task-master, in matters where vital social interests were involved. Ranade was as averse to the planlessness of liberal economy as to its virtual anarchy. With the expansion in world markets and the utilisation of costly productive reforms the economic unity of the state is becoming more and more pronounced. Economy is really becoming national and as such it must be nationally organised. As the very idea of state direction and regulation was violently out of keeping with the predilections of the Government of India, Ranade did not consider it worth while developing an integrated scheme of national economic reform. This much, however, is obvious. Ranade favoured a planned and state regulated industrialisation of India, as contrasted with the indifferent and disorganised regime that prevailed in his days.

Many of the individual reforms in the economic sphere sponsored by Ranade will be surveyed in the pages to follow. It is necessary in the present place to outline the general objective towards which Ranade wanted the national movement to be consciously guided. The growing ruralisation of the country, amounting to rustication, was the worst of economic portents. This had to be removed at all costs. The progress of national economy towards health and welfare would be measured in proportion to the check put on this process. Urbanisation and efficient production in place of rustication and superficial tillage were Ranade's watchwords.⁵ Nobody who knew the deep regard and concern in which Ranade held

5. A due co-ordination of the three-fold forms of industrial activity, even if it be not immediately most advantageous to individuals in any one period, is a permanent national insurance against recurrent dangers, and as such is economically the most beneficial course in the interests of the community.—(E. 26).

the farmer can accuse him of partiality for the non-agriculturist classes. Not because he neglected the agriculturist, but exactly because he loved him, Ranade was eager to associate an expanding and progressive industry with agriculture, which also he wanted to reorganise on more productive lines. Agriculture, industry and trade, all progressing side by side, were desired by Ranade.

Not only for the fulness and richness of national economy but also for its assured stability Ranade desired to have a variegated or three-fold economy. Agriculture indeed was to be the very foundation of the economic structure. Large-scale manufactures were to supplement and transform agricultural produce into more valuable objects of human desire. Trade with all its accompaniments such as transport and finance was to play its twin part both as a bridge and as a leaven. Considering the large scale on which investment of capital is needed to work a mechanised industry Ranade felt that the financial organisation most appropriate to the early stage of Indian industrialisation would be the joint stock company.⁶ The tendencies towards monopoly or anti-social and predatory operation of these bodies were not overlooked. But the watchful and active role that Ranade indicated for the state was expected to cover the regulation of joint-stock enterprise. The investing classes, the wage-earning labourers and the enterprisers had all to be trained for their respective jobs. This could happen only by allowing a recognised field for free association of capital, labour and enterprise.

In one particular Ranade was keen to notice the shortcomings of current economic policy both in Free Trade and protectionist countries. In both, more attention tended to be given to foreign than to domestic trade. At any rate for India, Ranade felt that it was not desirable to overlook the full possibilities of the domestic market. That Indian economy was really continental in its natural characteristics was one of the considera-

6. There is capital ready to hand awaiting secure investment. There is the broad dreary expanse of industry which is thirsting for capital, and offering the most secure investment for its fruitful employment. What is wanting is the necessary skill and patience which will adjust the capacity of the one to the wants of the other, and make both work in a spirit of harmony and co-operation.—(E. 39).

tions leading to Ranade's concern for domestic trade. The variety of resources and needs that India was in a position to offer to the would-be author of an industrial plan were very remarkable. By developing the domestic market to its fullest extent the maximum amount of economic development which would be free from several disturbing factors in external trade would be easily secured. The stabilising influence of a large scale market is much more pronounced in the domestic than in the foreign field. Industrialisation should as far as possible be based on the needs of the national market. The foreign market cannot indeed be ruled out, nor is it desirable to do so. In the light of recent developments in economic thought and practice this caution on the part of Ranade appears almost prophetic.

In Ranade's plan for economic reform in India the state occupied a very important place. For him the state was the instrument of collective thought and action par excellence. But in referring to the role of the Government of India in any scheme of economic action Ranade found great difficulty. To begin with, it could not be said that the position of the Government of India vis-a-vis the Indian people was a natural one. In spite of the occasional professions of some English writers and statesmen the fact could not be concealed that a big element of exploitation existed in Britain's connection with India. The War of American Independence brought about a welcome change in Britain's policy with regard to its colonies inhabited by white people, such as Canada and Australia. But wherever they had to deal with a brown dependency or with a coloured colony, the relationship between England and the dependent territory was still that of the exploiter and the exploited.

Much as Ranade had to say about this situation in his capacity of a politician, as an ardent economic reformer he had to take the immediate limitations of the situation for granted. Assuming the composition and purpose of government to be what they were, Ranade still felt that they were going the wrong way about their business. Allowing unchecked competition between English and Indian business and providing railway transport for the growing foreign commerce were both

unsatisfactory steps. As a result of the unchecked competition of superior industry the whole of the Indian economy was crumbling. Decay of industry led to ruralisation and this in turn led to increased pressure of population on land and to growing inefficiency of agriculture. This situation did not redound either to the welfare of the people or to the economic and political strength of the Government. Ranade argued that the Government of India should give up its general policy of unconcern and aloofness. It should follow up the beginning made by it in respect of railways and should assume a direct responsibility for guiding the industrial regeneration of the country in all departments of its economic activity.

A government that subsidised a revolutionary improvement and extension of communications without guarding against the natural repercussions on industry was acting in a fatally half-hearted and inconsistent fashion. A disturbance of the old balance among the several occupations was artificially promoted without providing for any new position of stability. This was bad for the people and bad for the government, in as much as the latter's safety and strength depended primarily on the solvency of the people. To convert government to an appreciation of the need for an active economic role and of the importance of building up the economic strength of the country was the cherished object of all that Ranade wrote on the subject of economic policy. It cannot be said that he was rewarded by the immediate reactions produced on the authorities of the day. In fact the government showed a most disturbing readiness to withdraw from even the familiar fields of state regulation. This happened very prominently in two cases. The system of rural credit in India was the outcome of the peculiar needs of the Indian cultivator. The non-transferability of real property except in certain well recognised cases was a cardinal feature in that system. As the rural borrower was almost always the more needy party the bias of both the customary and state regulation of credit transactions was definitely in favour of the client. Under Benthamite influence the Indian law and procedure were remodelled so as to leave complete freedom to the creditor and debtor to enter into any contract. This had disastrous

consequences which no amount of later remedial legislation has been able to set right. What happened to rural credit also happened to land revenue. The old system of basing land revenue demand on gross production, collecting it at elastic rates and of recognising the collective character of the village in all revenue matters was best suited to Indian economic and social needs. A more rigid, individualistic and elaborate system introduced de novo by the British Government only perfected the ruinous process, started by indifference and pushed by legislation based on the doctrine of governmental non-intervention in economic affairs.

The Government of India was in these matters but the instrument of a policy settled by the Home Government. Though the predilections of the local officers were essentially the same as those of the Home authorities their closer contact with the situation made them at least occasionally hesitant about persisting in their policy. The Home Government was entirely out of touch with the needs of the situation. Ranade had occasionally to distinguish between the two authorities and in fact to advocate the case of the Indian government against that of the Secretary of State. These were, however, differences of detail. On the broad question as to the role of the state in economic life and the need for the Government of India to assume the leadership in a nationwide plan of industrial regeneration both governments were equally apathetic. Through speeches and writings, through individual and collective effort Ranade tried his utmost not only to convert the official and non-official mind, but also to indicate the leading characteristics of an economic policy that would at once suit the interests of the Indian people and meet the just claims of the British rulers.

If only the Government recognised the crucial importance of the economic problem in India and the central responsibility of the state in the matter Ranade was confident that a programme of constructive reform was ready to hand. The central problem of Indian economy was one of poverty. Indian poverty was all the more sinister in its national implications as it was taking a serious turn on account of the growing population of the country. Even as it was, destitution was the lot of a

large section of the people. A very large majority of the people were living a precarious existence. A surplus of income and a comfortable life were the privileges of the very few. Economic weakness was the foundation of every other aspect of national weakness. In face of increasing importance of economic strength on the one hand and the growing numbers of the people on the other a concerted and vigorous attack on Indian poverty was the first step in any programme of economic action.

That a onesided development of transport without any improvement in production had only intensified the poverty of the Indian people was fully recognised by Ranade.⁷ He was also alive to the various social and political causes of Indian poverty. But poverty as an absolute and perennial fact of Indian economic life was according to Ranade due to the country's dependence on the single industry of agriculture and the pursuit of even this latter by the old superficial methods. Unless science and organisation were pressed into the service of agriculture and non-agricultural industries and commerce were assiduously promoted in the country the problem of poverty would not be solved. To provide expanding employment to a growing population was the keystone of any structure of Indian economic policy.

Ranade had learnt by reference to Western experience that the best way to induce a balance between resources and population was to make it possible for the people by their own exertions to live a comfortable and useful life. Once this possibility was brought home to the people, not only would a population balance be easily induced but the strength of the nation as a whole would be easily assured. Industrialisation of the economy was the chief remedy prescribed by Ranade for Indian poverty. As a supplement to this main suggestion Ranade recommended a systematic and energetic programme of migrations, internal as also external. Various parts of the country were awaiting development. Improvement in scientific resources has now made it possible to bring under cultivation

7. Facilities of communication are certainly desirable advantages, but more desirable still is the capacity to grow higher kinds of produce and develop manufacturing and industrial activities.—(E. 83-84).

many lands which in an undeveloped economy could not be tilled on account of an unfavourable climate and other physical reasons. A survey of the whole country with a view to initiate planned internal colonisation was necessary.

Migrations taking place in the pursuit of such plans ought not to be individual haphazard acts.⁸ Not only must initial assistance and concession be granted by the state, but through a special commission set up for the purpose all the accompaniments of a productive economy must be secured. Ranade believed that if a favourable environment and an encouraging prospect were held before the colonists they would develop all the qualities necessary to make a success of the new ventures. The example of these successful colonies of industrially minded citizens would serve as a tonic to the rest of the population.

Side by side with the schemes of internal migrations a determined attempt should be made to promote assisted and organised emigration to foreign lands. Several countries in Africa, Asia and America can be mentioned which in historical times had close cultural, ethnic and commercial ties with the Indian people. Ranade's idea was to send out picked and well-equipped parties of colonists to these parts. Labour, capital, enterprise and cultural agencies should all move together and recreate the Greater India which was the glory of the ancient Indian civilisation. Economically such a policy of vigorous colonisation would not fail to produce the most favourable results on the position of those who emigrated abroad and on those whom they left behind. Movement in new lands and contact with world forces constituted a very necessary impetus to India's rejuvenation. Thus whether we looked to our past tradition or to our present needs and future hopes a policy of

8. A regular system of immigration from thickly populated poor agricultural tracts to sparsely peopled new and virgin districts is a desideratum. The halting efforts made in this direction produce no good, for the concessions are not liberal enough, and there is no prescience about it. The ancient rulers who settled waste districts, and founded towns with flourishing and extensive industries, made no difficulty about granting the most liberal concessions.—(E. 27).

planned and vigorous colonisation was seen to be highly desirable.

When Ranade wrote about these things, the barriers in the way of colonisation were not so formidable as they later on proved to be. But if the process suggested by Ranade had been initiated by the Government of the day with the full concurrence of the Government of Great Britain not only would India have been better economically but the Empire itself would have benefitted in many ways. In place, however, of the organised colonisation of Indian communities that was suggested by Ranade the Government here and at home were content with the acquisition for colonial development of the coolie labour of India. As the Indians who emigrate under the emigration schemes of the British colonists come only from the class of the poorest section of the Indian community and as they are in no way connected organically with the life of the mainland of India their lot in the colonies though slightly better economically is not very enviable in other respects. Moreover their experience abroad brings no stimulus to the economic or cultural improvement at home. Unless a better type of people emigrate under schemes which assure to them the rights of full citizenship abroad and enable them to maintain their contact with the mother country the full advantage of our geographical position will not be secured.

In the changed political conditions of the world such a prospect now recedes more than ever into the background. Unless India gains to herself enough strength to press for its just claims this scheme of Ranade will remain impracticable. But if and when the day arrives when we can plan a policy of external colonisation for ourselves, the vacant and thinly populated lands in the four continents must be the fields for our enterprising efforts. Indians are essentially a colonising race; their history before the advent of the mechanical age proves this. If we now assimilate the superior power, for good and evil, of the new scientific and organised methods, our old tradition may yet serve a new national purpose. The solution of the Indian economic problem is not confined to the Indian soil. Our economic as also our cultural destiny is to be read

from a very much larger book than can be contained in the present geographical limits of India.

Industrialisation of which the whole country was so badly in need was according to Ranade most needed in agriculture. This might appear as a paradox to some people. As a matter of fact this is sober truth. In the first place all our past has been mostly agricultural. The people in all parts have for centuries been accustomed to the profession of tillage. Their inherited skill and aptitude must be most naturally utilised in this industry. Our climate and soil are two of our most important natural advantages. Unless we make the best of our natural resources industrialisation may be both delayed and costly. Even on social grounds Ranade preferred the agricultural-cum-manufacturing to a purely manufacturing or trading society. The civic and national virtues of patriotism and sacrifice which are the essential bulwarks of a successful national career can never be so well built up in a manufacturing and trading as in an agricultural nation. With all his enthusiasm for manufacture and trading the farmer was yet the special object of concern with Ranade. The farmer's industry must be first reorganised and improved, if the nation as a whole is to feel the bracing effects of an economic revolution.

There was another more technical reason for Ranade's insistence on a modernisation of our agricultural economy. No nation can now afford to build up a superstructure of manufacturing industry on the insecure foundation of foreign supplies of raw and other essential materials. Though complete self-sufficiency is neither desirable nor possible local supplies so improve the terms of foreign trade as to make an intensive programme of agricultural development a desirable part of any scheme of industrialisation. As with supplies so with markets. While a foreign market may serve as a supplemental outlet for many industries and as the chief customer for some industries, yet the stability of industries requires a steady custom which an improving agricultural industry can alone supply in our country. If we add to these undoubted advantages the further one of a modernised and scientific outlook induced by the transformation of the main and basic industry of the people it will be clearly seen that an agricultural revolution in technique

and organisation is essential both in the immediate interests of the agriculturists as also in the long term interests of the other industries and the nation at large.⁹

For an agricultural revolution to take place in our country there are many obstacles. Ranade was fully aware of these. The tonic effect that is exercised by an assured and profitable market¹⁰ either at home or abroad was not available here. In fact on account of growing ruralisation the agricultural industry was becoming more and more depressed each year. A depressed industry is not in the best condition for initiating a revolutionary change by an internal effort. In the second place, in many parts of the country the size of holdings was so small as to render any long term investment unprofitable. The resources either in money or enterprise that could be mustered by most landowners were too limited to enable them to reform their methods. In the parts where large scale holdings by zamindars were the order of the day, direct interest in cultivation was confined only to the resourceless sub-holders whose number was very large. In spite of these difficulties the revolution in agriculture had to be induced all the same.

Ranade was not deterred by these formidable difficulties. He had a scheme to suit almost all situations. In the case of undeveloped lands which would be available for direct exploitation by the state itself Ranade suggested the establishment

9. In domestic interchange also, the same law operates, and every nation which desires economical advance has to take care that its urban population bears an increasing ratio to its rural masses with every advance it seeks to make. Mr. John Stuart Mill has expressly laid down that no agriculture can be really productive which is divorced from a neighbouring non-agricultural market represented by thriving towns and cities. Under native rulers there was a sort of rude adjustment made in this direction, when the courts of the petty sovereigns afforded so many centres of urban activity in industries patronised by the court and its dependents.—(E. 26)

10. In short, the Java Culture System may be described as a system of encouraging the planting of remunerative crops, and manufacturing them for the European market, by private agency and at private risk, with Government advances, and under Government supervision, and with Government as the sole customer. All the three parties who worked the system, the Government, the contractor, and peasant, benefitted by it. —(E. 72).

of state¹¹ farms. Even at the present day the idea of a state farm in India except for demonstration and experimental purposes is considered to be unacceptable. In Ranade's days when the attitude of the state was definitely opposed to active association with economic effort the suggestion for a state farm must have been greeted as heretical. Ranade, however, could point out the earlier attempts made at state cost and state initiative for the cultivation of tea and cinchona. At least for the purpose of overcoming the difficulties of a pioneer in the new methods of agriculture, and demonstrating not only the technical but also the economic success of the new system of agriculture, a state farm was the only available instrument in a country like India where for several reasons private enterprise was not likely to be forthcoming.

Not that Ranade gave up the idea of inducing private owners to initiate the new agriculture. He recognised that for the success of improved agriculture two conditions were pre-eminently necessary. Firstly, the scale on which agriculture is carried on must be sufficiently big fully to utilise all the improved resources that would be pressed into service. The possession of such big units of land and the costly equipment and machinery with which to till them would entail the use of large capital. Unless agriculture became an inviting proposition to the capitalist it would not be reorganised as a business. As will be seen on a later page, Ranade favoured a restriction of the right of farmers to transfer land for improvident and unsecured debts. But he was too close a student of nature and business affairs not to see that the transfer of property from the spending to the saving classes was a law of nature. While easy transferability was to be checked no artificial barrier was to be placed in the way of natural concen-

11. The theory of the system was that all Government lands not required for rice cultivation, which afforded subsistence to the cultivators, were to be planted with crops for which there was a demand in Europe, by means of advances to be made by the State to private contractors, who undertook to plant the particular crops, and sell the produce to Government at fixed rates, and liquidate the advance made to them by instalments in a fixed number of years.—(E. 70).

tration of landed property that would go on much in the same way as in the case of other property.¹²

Capital would normally flow into such industries as offer the best prospect of return. The margin of advantage would depend on the difference between cost and price. While chalking out an agricultural policy the state cannot afford to ignore the price factor. To secure for the enterprising and efficient agriculturist a decent margin of profit must be the concern of the state. The experiments carried on state farms would be a good guide to the state to determine what would be a remunerative price or a decent margin of profit. Even in the absence of a state farm suitable inquiries might reveal the condition of farming as a business. Much in the same way as a fair selling price is now determined for a protected industry, it would not be difficult to find out the margin of return that an efficient farmer ought to get. As in other businesses so in agriculture, though perhaps not to the same extent. Ranade was aware that the new improved methods can only pay on a large scale, and that the new vogue would not be familiarised except by state help and state pioneering. This part of Ranade's work deserves very close attention from those who are concerned with agricultural progress.

While Ranade was not deterred from suggesting suitable legislative and financial reforms to encourage capitalistic or large scale farming he did not imply that small-scale or low farming should be wiped out of existence. He suggested the formation of co-operative unions for purposes of credit and other agricultural services. What one capitalist would get out of his own resources several small farmers could obtain through a co-operative society. The policy of the state could be so shaped as to favour the small men's co-operative union. While full trial could be given to this method Ranade was not

12. In all countries property, whether in land or other goods, must gravitate towards that class which has more intelligence and greater foresight, and practises abstinence, and must slip from the hands of those who are ignorant, improvident and hopeless to stand on their own resources. This is a law of providence and can never be wisely or safely ignored by practical statesmen, for any fancied political or sentimental considerations.
—(E. 297-98)

so hopeful that all the prospects of agricultural reform in India could be made to depend on the voluntary and co-operative effort of small farmers. The state and the men of enterprise had to take the lead in any case. Once the success of the new method was established smaller farmers may well be left to benefit by the example either in isolation or in co-operative union.

While the passing of land into the hands of capitalistic farmers did not worry Ranade he was definitely opposed to the easy transfer of land to the moneylender as such. From the standpoint of the nation's economic interest there is a very vital difference between concentration of land in the hands of the moneylender and the capitalist farmer. If a moneylender owns a hundred acres but is not interested in farming as an industry, the unit of farming, both in respect of the size of holding and the enterprise of the cultivator, remains a small one. On the other hand, if a farmer with the necessary resources owns a large block of land he is enabled to cultivate it in the most progressive and economical fashion. All possible steps should be taken to prevent as far as legislation can go the transfer of land to the merely owning landlord. That the ownership and cultivation of land cannot be neglected by the state in an agricultural community such as India was acceptable to Ranade. In fact he very severely criticised that abolition of the usury laws which were such a desirable protection to the indigent debtor against a not too scrupulous moneylender.

In two respects he hoped legislation may help the agricultural debtor. The courts ought to be instructed and empowered to go into the history of each contract and to study not only its form but also its substance. Having judged for itself what the reality of each transaction was the court was to decide on the amount of interest and capital due to the creditor and on the manner of repayment. In respect of the rate and maximum amount of interest as also the instalments of repayment the courts should have discretion granted to them within legal limits. The earlier bias of English legislation in India was to leave the whole debt contract unregulated. Neither money-lending nor its sequel in courts was in any way regulated. Parties to the debt contract were supposed to know and protect their inter-

ests best. It was left for the state only to enforce the terms of the contract. Such an attitude towards contracts was not in keeping with Indian practice, nor was it inherently justifiable in the peculiar conditions of rural credit during the period of British rule.

That which in pre-British days was secured by custom had to be now secured by law. The customary regulations had to be reduced to enactments. The healthy check on the mal-practices of the money-lender which was exercised by local opinion was no longer available. Legislative control over money-lending, enactment of usury laws, equipping the courts with discretionary powers – were all much needed reforms.¹³ As property in India, especially landed property, was considered to be a trust for the family and for the community its easy transferability under the new regime had to be restricted. As a general rule, land was to be transferred for 'only provident loans and even then when it was definitely offered as security for the loan. As a general policy the dispossessed debtor was to be given a reasonable opportunity to redeem his land within a number of years. During recent years much progress along these lines has been made in the several provinces. Had the remedial process started earlier, and had it been as comprehensive and circumspect as Ranade wanted it to be, the net advantage would have been much more apparent than it now seems to be.

On one count Ranade did not favour the adoption of the practice of easy insolvency adopted by more commercialised communities such as Great Britain. In the face of growing rural indebtedness it has often been suggested that the hopelessly involved debtors should be given the advantage of an easy insolvency procedure. The idea underlying this proposal is both commendable and sound. No citizen should be permanently put out of action as long as he promises to be an efficient producer. Even if he has made a hopeless mess of an old business it should be open to him after declaring himself bankrupt

13. The necessity of re-organizing credit transactions is thus not confined to agriculturist classes. It is a general necessity created in this country by its circumstances and habits, and any measures which tend to rescue this business from its present chaos, and restore certainty and honesty in it, are sure to put new life and energy in the body politic.—(E. 57).

to start a new one. Such a periodical cleaning of the state is occasionally needed no less in agricultural than in commercial and industrial credit. But the English manner of repudiation is obnoxious to the Indian mind where liability to repay one's own and one's blood-relations' debts is considered to be a religious duty. Even on more material grounds it is necessary to realise that the personal credit of the indigent and needy farmer is likely to be seriously damaged by even the possibility of repudiation.

If then individual and unilateral repudiation such as is the origin of bankruptcy proceedings is to be ruled out and yet a cleaning of the slate for the hopelessly involved is to be provided, how can we set about the business? In place of individual bankruptcy Ranade suggested the revival of the old practice of social arbitration. Whenever a debtor found that he and his dependents were thoroughly drowned under the rising level of indebtedness an appeal to the community to discharge him honourably was always provided. Though recourse even to such a tribunal was always considered a matter of last resort still the intervention of one's own fellow citizens to bring about a reasonable settlement tempered the social ignominy of a bankruptcy. Not only for extraordinary situations such as those caused by depressions, famines and pestilences but also as a standing provision for desperate cases debt-composition tribunals, representative of respectable public opinion, had to be provided. Such a provision would have a healthy effect both on the creditor and the debtor.¹⁴

With all the reform in legislation and debt composition suggested by Ranade he never for a moment believed that by legislation alone could the problem of rural indebtedness be satisfactorily solved. Continued indebtedness and recurring failures in the agricultural industry were the consequences of the poor and precarious returns of the business. Much as legislation would temper the impact of the evil, it could not altogether remove it. Unless the business of farming was transformed into a paying business, the credit of the farmer could

14. The ryot once emancipated and set on his feet and inspired with a sense that the land is as absolutely his as his home or clothes, there need never be any apprehension of his running into debt again and not practising thrift.—(E. 229).

not be restored on a secure basis. The reform of agriculture suggested by Ranade is noted above. His suggestions for transforming and vitalising the industrial structure will be noticed in the next chapter. A thorough industrialisation of all occupations in the country could alone make the agricultural industry a fit subject for the provision of adequate and easy credit. In the meanwhile, in addition to legislative reforms several administrative and institutional measures could be adopted so as to give the farmer the best possible chance to make a success of his business.¹⁵

Of these institutional reforms Ranade was most urgently in favour of the establishment of agricultural banks. These banks were to differ in a very important respect from the co-operative credit societies. The latter are for the most part associations of borrowers only. Both in respect of material and administrative resources these are inadequately equipped to run as successful businesses. Though Ranade had no objection to the formation of co-operative societies where the material was suitable, it is obvious that he did not look upon them either as a universal panacea or as a very promising instrument of rural reconstruction. For the most part what was wanted was the organisation of the moneylending classes to suit the new requirements. Much as we should like to do away with the middleman, he is so much a necessity in our life as to make the attempt to remove him a futile one. In some fields and for some purposes he can be got rid of. But as a general rule the function for which he answers has got to be separately provided for.

While the idea of having the moneylender to work in association with the client in a common society is an attractive one, it can never work in practice, as there is an inevitable conflict of interests between the two. Borrowing is a need

15. Let the State interfere not merely with a minimum piecemeal dose of judicial reform but by the wholesale dispensation of a large administrative relief. If it subsidizes or guarantees private banks against risk during the first few experimental years and enables them to rid the peasantry of their ancestral debts, and if at the same time it allows the land revenue to be redeemed or permanently settled at a moderate figure once for all, it will provide an ample fund for agricultural relief improvement without the necessity of borrowing a single rupee of fresh loans.—(E. 228)

which all farmers usually have and cannot themselves meet. Hence the function has to be separately organised. The moneylenders of old supplied the need in a manner suitable to the times. With the increasingly changeful and individualistic nature of economic organisation the traditional methods of finance are no longer suitable. Along with a change in industrial organisation a change in banking organisation also is inevitable, in fact necessary. Ranade hoped that ultimately the role of the moneylender would be taken up by organised banks.¹⁶ The banks would collect the savings of the people, and working within the provisions of the law attend to the credit needs of the agriculturists. The actual type of bank evolves according to needs, and it was only to be expected that in course of time a special type of Indian rural bank would develop.

Taking the peculiar conditions of Deccan villages and their needs into account, Ranade in consultation with bankers and administrators had a special type of an agricultural bank¹⁷

16. The emancipation of the population from this source of moral degradation by interposition of the banks has proved of the highest value as an agency for the education of the people in the best virtues of citizenship. —(E. 54).

17. The promoters of the agricultural bank desired that Government should sanction the experiment in one taluka by undertaking an inquiry into the previous debts of the agriculturists, which when ascertained were to be paid off by the Government, the bank undertaking to make good the sum so paid on conditions of its being allowed a first charge on the mortgaged estates of the ryots so benefitted. The bank undertook to charge very low rates of interest, and to recover them in instalments fixed with the approval of Government officers. To prevent all disputes, it agreed to leave this work of collection of instalments due in the hands of the village authorities, who were to realise the instalments as they now realize the assessment of Government or its tagai advances. Lastly, the bank prayed that assessment within the area so dealt with should not be raised so as to disturb the arrangements that it might enter into, and that their transactions should be exempted from all taxes and charges. In consideration of their undertaking to finance and work the concern and charge low rates of interest, the Government was to help them to obtain speedy and cheap execution. It will be seen that none of the special privileges and concessions asked for were without their precedent in the Credit Fanciers and land mortgage banks subsidized and helped and controlled by the European States. The scheme, however, fell through then for reasons which it is needless now to relate.—(E. 58-59)

in view. The proposal being in the nature of a new experiment Ranade had suggested that it should be tried in one taluka before it was extended to the rest of the province. As a first step the state should carry out a detailed economic inquiry of the area, especially with reference to the indebtedness of the inhabitants. After suitable conciliation and arbitration the agreed debt should be paid off by the Government. A bank composed mainly of the substantial money-lenders of the district who were prepared to combine business with constructive economic service would then be formed and would take over the financial burden of the state. In return the bank was to be allowed a first charge on the property of the clients whose debts had been paid. The rate of interest would be very much lower in comparison with the prevailing Sawkar's rates, and the repayment would be arranged by a suitable number of instalments. Both in fixing the rate of interest and the number of instalments Government would have a right to be consulted.

In the matter of collection the state was to help by arranging for collection of the interest and instalments along with the land revenue. With a view to give the relief measure the best possible chance of success, Government was to agree to stabilise the revenue settlement at least during the period of redemption of old debts. The scheme of financial relief and revenue stabilisation was to be accompanied by a constructive reform of the rural economy. Thus almost all the usual pitfalls of a scheme of debt redemption and rural credit were avoided. The obvious merits of the scheme and the pressing character of the problem of rural indebtedness induced the Government of Bombay and later on even the Government of India to favour the initiation of the scheme. The Secretary of State, however, negatived the whole scheme on the ground that it involved questions regarding the revenue and administrative policies of the state.

The problem of rural indebtedness is so persistent and involved that it can never be very confidently asserted that any particular scheme of relief will surely succeed. But there was reason to hope that if the methodical, comprehensive and constructive reform suggested by Ranade was approved a very

promising beginning would be made. But the basic difficulty of state indifference and inaction again exercised a preliminary veto. How very unhelpful is the attitude of the state in the matter of helping financial agencies, even those which are in a way semi-public concerns such as the co-operative societies, is clearly seen from the recent repudiation of responsibility by the state in the matter of recoveries of the dues of co-operative societies. If the state is not prepared to help by constructive economic reform nor by special facilities and concessions to voluntary relief agencies, the regime of unchecked exploitation and the consequent impoverishment of the nation is allowed a free run. All the effort of Ranade was aimed at counteracting these ruinous tendencies of the economic situation.

The stabilisation of land revenue was an item of economic policy to which Ranade attached a much wider importance than is conveyed by its bearing on the scheme of debt redemption and rural credit. Ranade did not approve of the Ricardian doctrine that rent is a surplus above cost and hence does not enter into the expenses of cultivation. He also disapproved of the theory according to which the state claimed rights of proprietorship in all land which it had not specifically alienated. He held that land was as much private property as any other object and that if it is to be taxed the usual canons of taxation ought to apply. The growing population of the country and the consequent ruralisation caused a great demand for land as an instrument of production. The earnings of labour proportionately went down. Thus high rents were the result of the depression in wages and as revenues were demanded from all, rents like taxes entered into the costs of production. In fact the burden of land revenue fell heavily on the wages of the farmers. In any scheme of rural reform this burden has, therefore, to be so equitably adjusted as to leave the cultivator in hope that any increase in production will not be appropriated mostly by the state.

The details of the financial merits of Ranade's proposal¹⁸ to stabilise the land revenue will be discussed in the next

18. A permanent ryotwari settlement fixed in grain which the land produces and commuted into money values every twenty or thirty years can alone furnish a solution of this agricultural problem.—(E. 299).

chapter along with the rest of his suggestions for financial reform. That the taxation policy of the state must be so adjusted as to conform to the general plan of rural reconstruction is a truth which is too often ignored. Ranade had taken care to put this point in the very forefront of his scheme. Another aspect of the life of the rural population, both in the field of production and earning, was well emphasised by Ranade. For social and political no less than for economic reasons, Ranade desired to create valuable rights of proprietorship for the actual cultivators of the soil. There is nothing like the magic of proprietary rights to induce a man to put in his best exertions as a producer. Equally well if a man labours in his business and runs all the attendant risks, he must be compensated in a suitable manner. Efficiency in production and justice in distribution both demanded the enactment of a tenancy law in India. The fixity of tenure, fairness of rents and transferability of interest are valued rights which the tenantry must have if the wealth and welfare of the countryside are to be properly promoted. The need of special legislation in their case arises for the same reason as in that of the workers employed in factories.

The experience that the British administrators had of factory laws in England and the constant pressure exercised by Lancashire made for a speedy adoption of labour legislation in India. Though the principle underlying tenancy legislation was the same it did not make a real appeal to the Government. In the areas where the Zamindari tenures prevailed Government was more ready to undertake tenancy legislation than in the Ryotwari areas. But the evil effects of an unprotected tenancy on the system of production and the unfair treatment meted out to the tenants continued all the same. As the pressure on land grew in intensity the position of the tenantry became more and more helpless. In spite of the admonitions of the leaders of public opinion Government stirred neither to lend protection against its own harrassing system of land revenue nor against the unfair demands of the landlords. In fact the two attitudes were causally interrelated. Until the Government was prepared to reduce its own exactions to a fair basis it found it inconvenient to restrict the freedom of the landlords.

Ranade urged that side by side with a reform of the revenue system tenancy¹⁹ legislation also ought to be immediately undertaken. The *raison d'être* of all such social legislation is the responsibility that rests on the state to secure equitable conditions of contract and to provide for a socially beneficent system of production. These two objectives are so inherent in the very nature of social authority and organised human life that no vested interests that stand in the way of the realisation of these objectives can be said to be legally valid. The initiation of labour legislation need not depend on a compensation of those whose vested interest is to carry on business in the absence of such legislation. Equally well the initiation of a general scheme of tenancy legislation is in no way dependent on a scheme of compensation. In fact compensation is not relevant to the discussion at all, at any rate from the tenants to the landlords.

The general body of tenants is so ill organised and needy that the terms that they ordinarily get out of the landlords tend in practice to be hard and unjust. This is bad for the tenantry and bad for the country. Hence fair rents, secure tenancy and transferability of interest have to be secured for the bona fide tenant. Ranade was too good a friend both of the peasant proprietor and of the enterprising landlord to place unlimited emphasis on tenancy laws. While the bona fide and efficient tenant deserves protection, the inefficient and malingering one needs restraint. In any case the system of land being actually cultivated by the owner of moderate means or by the substantial and enterprising landlord was very much of a desideratum. The rights of tenants, which after all are subordinate to those which the owners can justly claim, ought not to stand in the way of an efficient system of cultivation.

19. Lastly, the advanced theory expounded by the modern school fully justifies the attempts made by the Government here and in England to check the abuse of competition among poor tenants by conferring fixity of tenure, by adjusting rents judicially for a term of years, and imposing limitations on its increase. In this matter the tenants of Government claim the same consideration as those of private zemindars. The justification for this active interference is invalid in regard to agricultural labourers and miners in Europe,—(E. 30).

CHAPTER VI

ECONOMIC PLANNING

" Natural aptitudes, undeveloped but unlimited resources, peace and order, the whole world open to us, our marvellous situation as the emporium of all Asia, these priceless advantages will secure success, if we endeavour to deserve it by striving for it. This is the creed for the propagation of which, by exhortation and example, the Industrial Association of Western India was started, and I feel sure it will soon become the creed of the whole nation, and ensure the permanent triumph of the modern spirit in this ancient land. " [E. 114-15].

To Ranade's best known disciple, Gokhale, is attributed the noble motto, " We must spiritualise politics ". To a man of Ranade's deep-seated religiosity the whole human life was a field for exercising spirituality. But if he ever singled out one activity for being specially in need of spiritualisation, it was the industrialisation of the country. The best known essay¹ of Ranade on Indian economics had its origin in the author's desire to rouse in the Government of India an enthusiasm for the industrialisation of the country. It was for this that he studied the philosophy and the practical achievements of the Mercantilists. He hoped by setting them in proper perspective to weaken the opposition of the English administrators to a positive role in the economic sphere. By appealing to the great careers² of Peter the Great and of Colbert he desired to induce some ambitious, capable and far-seeing British statesmen to realize and to rise to the full possibilities of the Indian situation. In this hope, however, Ranade was completely foiled.

1. I have in my Essay on Indian Political Economy endeavoured to lay down a few general principles which should regulate the action of the state in respect of the development of industrial enterprise in India.—(E.152).

2. A Colbert or a Peter the Great is wanted to give effect to such a scheme, and the ordinary doctrines of *laissez faire* must be set aside in view of the great interests at stake.—(E. 28).

Ranade's fervour for industrialism was based on several deep-seated convictions. Even from a humanitarian standpoint the appalling poverty of the Indian people was such as would rouse the innate charity and pious urge of a man of Ranade's selfless temperament. Many a foreign missionary has been attracted to the Indian soil by the hope that he may carry relief to the economically and socially depressed among the teeming millions of India. No wonder that Ranade who lived for his countrymen should be moved to his very soul by the destitution that he saw all around him. Mere charitable relief would not, Ranade was convinced, solve the problem of a nation in destitution. A thorough reorganisation and rejuvenation of the industrial system was necessary. In industrialization³ lay the hope of raising the common people at least to the level of decent subsistence.

This was not the only urge that moved Ranade to take such an absorbing interest in the industrial movement. He was conscious of the fact that the Indian people once in the very forefront of human civilisation had grown stagnant, conservative and in certain respects even reactionary. If the Indian section of the great Aryan race were to live worthily as the descendants of the pioneers of civilisation their outlook and habits had to be rendered more alert, active, and creative. For this process of modernisation only two agencies had been in evidence. The first influence was that of the improving communications. As the contact with the outside world would become more and more intimate, and as the different parts of the country were more closely knit together by common ties of economic and political interest the intellectual isolation of the country would be broken. Old practices were found to be inconvenient and their ideological foundations were called into question. Once the questioning spirit got abroad nothing stood firm as it did formerly. New needs, new practices and new ideas began to assert themselves. The crust of conservatism and stagnation was finally pierced.

3. There can be no doubt that the permanent salvation of the country depends upon the growth of Indian manufactures and commerce, and that all other remedies can only be temporary palliatives.—(E. 116).

The institutions for English education that were established by official and non-official efforts acted as a direct challenge to the self-sufficiency of the old pandits. Many more things than were ever thought of in Indian philosophy were revealed to the new scholars. Though a large number of the newly educated people were absorbed by administrative services under government the influence exercised by them on the minds of their immediate contemporaries was by no means negligible. Not only histories and social sciences but even physical sciences such as chemistry, biology and physics began to unfold many a mystery of human life. With knowledge came power. Not only was a desire for better life created by a knowledge of the possibility of the same, but an attempt to study our own surroundings in the light of wider experience began to be made. This effort had an immediate effect which was unsettling in the extreme. But it stirred the intelligentsia of the country to a re-examination and reorientation of their intellectual being. This undoubtedly contributed in a large measure to a beginning of the movement of national renaissance.

Whether it was the economic and political unification of the country, or it was the new learning, the countryside was left mostly untouched. The isolation of the village and of the villager's outlook was hardly broken. The lot of the urban artisan was strikingly affected by the new industrial changes. But he was too completely stunned by his misfortunes to understand the nature of the new forces. He simply was pressed down, and out he went to the villages to swarm the number of bewildered and depressed inhabitants of the Indian countryside. This sight was a revolting and heart-rending one for a sensitive and gifted mind such as that of Ranade. Much as he appreciated the civilising influence of improving communications and of modern education, he could see that the former was known to the Indian masses only by its unsettling effect on their economic life and of the latter they knew nothing at all. A civilising force that would work for the positive benefit of the masses and would at the same time broaden and modernise their outlook was needed. Ranade discovered this force in

industrialization.⁴ Hence his fervent enthusiasm for the industrialisation of the country. Not only the material but also the cultural progress of the country was for Ranade inseparably associated with the progress of modern industry.

If a more immediate and practical consideration was needed further to emphasise the urgent need of industrialization it was supplied by the social divisions⁵ among the Indian people. Religion, caste and creed were for an average Indian the most important considerations. Ranade had no quarrel with this attitude of his countrymen. But he could see that unless the purely administrative unity imparted to the Indian continent by the establishment of the British regime was supplemented by common ties of interest and affinity the rise of an Indian nationalism based on natural factors would not be possible. A mere exhortation to subordinate religious to political considerations or an appeal to the ulterior importance of nationalism does not produce a sufficiently wide and deep impression. A few intellectuals talk of nationalism. Few either among them or among the people practise it. Ranade, as will be seen from a later chapter, worked for the propagation of a spirit of nationalism for its own sake. But all the while he was conscious of the limited appeal that such exhortation produced.

4. The sole dependence on agriculture has been the weak point of all Asiatic civilization. Contact with superior races ought certainly to remedy this helplessness, and not to aggravate it, as has been to a large extent the case in this country. As the result of the two systems at work in the two countries, our proportion of raw produce to manufactured produce exported is four to one, while it is one to four with our neighbours. The construction of Railways can never be compared in their educating influence to the setting up of mills or steam or water-power machinery for the production of manufactured produce in all parts of the country. A Railway runs from one end of the country to the other, and leaves no permanent impression upon the face of the country, at least none so durable and penetrating as that which surrounds a great manufactory.—(E. 84)

5. In this country especially there is no room for a difference of opinion. Hindus and Mahomedans, Parsees and Christians, the rulers and the ruled, the privileged and the unprivileged classes, all stand on a common platform, and, as the constitution of the present meeting itself demonstrates, are prepared to work together. The work of this Conference thus possesses certain advantages which are denied to similar gatherings for other more or less sectarian and party purposes—(E. 175).

If the industrial benefits of a common national life for the whole country were brought home to people of all religions and castes by their daily experience they would learn to act together for common interests without considerations of caste and creed. It was not necessary that they should be less religiously minded or that they should neglect their obligations to their caste. They had only to realise that industrialism was good for their material progress and that industrialism was feasible only as an accompaniment of Indian nationalism. Instead of being content with preaching these ideas from political platforms, if the actual course of industrialisation were to bring them home to the people a great national purpose would be served. Industrialism was to supply in Ranade's scheme of things a potent instrument for the material, cultural and political progress of the Indian people. If we follow this reasoning of Ranade then alone shall we be in a position to appreciate the almost religious fervour with which he threw himself into the task of the industrial reformation of India.

To one who set such a supreme value on industrialization the surrounding prospect was as desolating as it could be. It was not as though the country was too backward and too static in its economic organisation to cherish the hope of successful modernisation. By its past achievements and its existing resources and skill it was at least normally equipped for a successful industrial career. But the contact with the forces of modern industry had come in the shape of the establishment of a foreign government, which was not only foreign in its origin but continued to be foreign in its sympathies and interests. The profiteering outlook of the East India company in its political dealings in India was not thoroughly extinguished by the transfer of authority to the Crown. In place of a monopolistic corporation the whole body of British businessmen came to have an interest in profitable trade with India. The Government of India itself was too new to its responsibilities to appreciate to the full the ultimate implications of the situation. No government, least of all a government composed of Englishmen, ever looks far ahead in outlining its day to day policy. Both by affinity and interest it became the normal thing for the British Government in India to help English business to exploit the possibilities of the

Indian market. The new organisation of centralised business was new to most Indian enterprisers and capitalists. Very soon it was seen that all the newly developed businesses which held the key to further industrialization were in the hands of foreigners. Transport, insurance, banking—all were dominated by foreign interests which were none too friendly to the cause of Indian industry. The downward movement of the people's economy that started from their political misfortune was gathering momentum. In Ranade's words, "This is our condition, and when the whole situation is thus taken in at one view, we feel that we are standing on the edge of a precipice, and the slightest push down will drive us into the abyss below of unmixed and absolute helplessness."—(E. 179)

The extension of railway communications and the establishment of a secured administration all over the land gave a downward push to the nations' economy. The situation would have been different had there been an economic policy accompanying the railway and administration policies. The number of people employed in non-agricultural pursuits began to fall steadily and owing to the increasing pressure on land, as has been pointed out before, the returns from agriculture also began to deteriorate. The development of communications and establishment of peace over a large area are supposed to be factors which act as impetus to a growing division and specialisation of industry. But on account of the peculiar political conditions in the country all the economic advantages of peace and a wide market were primarily exploited by the foreign businessmen. Ranade was mindful of these anti-national influences and he urged that a definite industrial policy aimed at promoting the nation's interest should be adopted by the state. Knowing, however, that the vested foreign interests were not to be easily dislodged he addressed himself to the more positive and hopeful task of preparing his own countrymen for the industrial endeavour.

Ranade acknowledged the basic importance of available resources of nature as a controlling influence on the scope of industrialization. For many industries India is exceptionally rich in natural resources. The very expanse and continental character of the country are factors that induce a sense of

self-dependence which ought to be utilised to the full. Agricultural, mineral, forest and marine resources abound in many parts of the country. Such a feeling of complacency is natural to all thinkers and writers on the subject. Ranade while sharing the quiet optimism that underlies these views was, however, careful to observe that in two material respects this confidence may prove deceptive. Modern industrialization demands such a large variety of raw materials and accessory goods that no single country can be expected to possess all these. Import of important goods in appreciable quantities is essential to the building up even of a self-sufficient economy.

As the import has to be counterbalanced by an export the whole structure of costs of production in domestic and foreign industries becomes relevant. Thus it does not suffice merely to have raw materials and establishments for their manufacture but the efficiency with which this is done is to be considered while bringing about the intended disposal of productive resources among industries. The need for economic discrimination is all the greater when the objective of economic policy is not self-sufficiency but advantageous foreign contacts. Ranade's idea of the structure of India's foreign trade embraced expanding foreign markets. To hold our own in the internal as well as the external markets needed an innate improvement of the efficiency of production and marketing which only partially depended on the supply of raw materials. In fact, Ranade went the length of suggesting that if we develop skill, enterprise and organisation along proper and progressive lines we can venture even in those fields wherein our advantage in respect of raw materials is either weak or non-existent. In the light of contemporary organisation of successful industries in many countries and of the difficulties faced by some of our own, the reasoning underlying Ranade's argument will be seen to be thoroughly valid.

Both the physical equipment and the human aptitude which are essential for the progress of industry are plants of very slow growth. But it must be the policy of the state and the people steadily to work for such a development. Long term policies of industrialization have to be carefully outlined and vigorously carried out. There can be no successful indus-

trialisation without industrial education, but there will be no opportunity to impart the latter on the scale required for a nation-wide development of industry unless a beginning in large-scale and mechanical industry has been made. Two of the major arguments employed by Frederick List in support of a policy of protection are thus relevant to the situation; one, that promising industries in their infant stage deserve protection and two, that for the industrial education of a people a certain amount of industrialisation has to be provided, if need be, by artificial measures. Ranade admitted the strength of these arguments and he favoured a policy of special encouragement to industry. But whether these policies would in the end justify themselves depended according to him on ourselves, on what constructive use we make of the temporary opportunity created for us by a policy of protection. In fact, if the community or its enterprising industrialists were sufficiently energetic and capable they might succeed over a wide, though not very extensive, area even by their own unaided efforts.

The downfall of Indian handicrafts in the face of foreign competition was usually attributed to three causes. Firstly, there was the policy of indifference followed by the state. It has been already stated that Ranade disapproved of this policy and constantly urged upon Government the necessity of adopting a more active and planned policy of industrialisation. The second cause lay in the superiority of mechanical and scientific processes of production over the manual ones. Any progress of Indian economy even upto the subsistence level would depend to a large extent upon the improvement of the traditional methods of production. The need for such a technological transformation was urged by Ranade, the actual transformation being left to technicians and enterprisers. To Ranade's mind there was one further obstacle to Indian industrial reform. This lay in the spirit⁶ of progress, enterprise and achievement pervad-

6. There can be no question that the success of foreign competition is greatly helped by the abundance of these materials, but far more helpful than these materials is the spirit and skill which work them, and which conquered India long before steam-power came into use, and which turned the balance of trade against India. If we but acquire the spirit and the skill the resources will be discovered in yet unexplored situations all over the country,—(E. 181).

ing the mind of the people at large. It was this Industrial spirit which Ranade valued most and he felt that India was most deficient in this respect. Through the Industrial Conference Ranade tried to create this spirit among businessmen, publicists and citizens at large. Ranade wanted that the entire life of the people, social, political and economic, should be reorganised so as to be businesslike in the sense of being based on the needs and prospects of modern business and industry in India.

The development of the creative spirit was essentially a matter for psychological transformation. Indeed a change in environment, an improvement in political institutions, a liberalisation of social practices—all these would help the transformation induced by a new ideology. The experience of the antecedents of industrial revolutions elsewhere and even the experience of Indian colonists abroad lent support to the view that if a thorough-going change came over Indian society and politics the necessary spirit of disciplined industrialisation would be induced among the people. But the initial push to such a radical change requires the creation of a purposeful and active mental attitude. Ranade felt that if this spirit was created an intensive and organised effort would produce the skill. Past records of Indian industrial skill were sufficient guarantee for the technical aptitudes of the people. Given the spirit and the skill, even the paucity of natural resources could be overcome. The final prospect of industrialisation thus depended primarily on our spirit and skill. We had enough in our natural resources to hearten us in our initial efforts.

Ranade was not discouraged by the unsympathetic and inactive policy of the state. He did not feel that the sins of omission and commission of the Government of India were a sufficient excuse for the Indians themselves to neglect the all-important task of industrialisation. All the same he knew that the state could by its action make or mar the prospects of success. Knowing that both by predilection and interest the English governors of India took more kindly to a policy of inaction than of action Ranade framed his appeal to state aid in a series of claims of increasing

importance. As the simplest appeal he argued that for the defence of the country, adequate transport arrangements and a minimum of industrialisation were necessary. A good system of communications had already been instituted by Government partly for military and for commercial reasons. In this respect Ranade argued that as in a backward country it was necessary to take special steps to induce foreign capital to take to investment by special facilities and guarantee, it was equally necessary to induce the capitalist⁷, foreign and Indian, to establish industries in India.

Unless the industrial and agricultural production of the country was enhanced the military⁸ safety of the land would not be assured. Nor would the financial fortunes of the railways themselves be free from risk. In the light of later experience both in the matter of the financial results of the Indian railways and of the difficulties faced by defence industries in India, Ranade's criticism of Government railway policy appears to be fully borne out. Ranade suggested that the stocks required by such an extensive industry like the railways should be manufactured in India itself, preferably at state workshops. If this counsel had been accepted we would have by now been endowed with a well-established engineering industry which is the most urgent industrial need of the day. Side by side with the railway industry such basic industries as iron and steel would also have been established much earlier than has actually been the case. With the engineering and iron and steel industries well on the way to progress the whole task of industrialisation would have been considerably facilitated.

The advantages urged for a policy of simultaneous development of railways and of the iron and steel industry also apply

7. In truth, there is no difference of principle between lending such support and guidance, by the free use of its credit and superior organisation, in pioneering industrial undertaking or subsidizing private co-operative effort, and its guaranteeing minimum interest to railway companies.—(E. 33)

8. In the interests of military defence, the necessity of the Indian Government being provided with its own arms and ammunition is so obvious that it is not likely to be disputed. The same justification exists for the manufacture of the rolling stock and other materials likely to be required for State Railways. For commercial success the extension of the works, so as to meet private demand, will be soon forced upon Government.—(E. 169-70)

to the other supplies needed by state departments and for large scale public works. Either by the establishment of Government workshops⁹ or by encouraging local producers, the state could by its patronage help the establishment of many industries. Once familiarity with modern industry grew to some extent, skill, enterprise and resources would have full scope to assert themselves. All this can be done without changing¹⁰ the free trade tariff policy. If only the state recognised that it was organically connected with the rest of the society and that it had responsibility for co-ordination and leadership the steps for toning down the effects of sudden foreign competition would appear to be no more than normal administrative steps. This would be the natural view taken by any national or popular Government in the world. Occasionally the Government of India also was inclined to take a similar view of the matter ; but such occasions were rare and in almost all cases on such occasions they were overruled by the Home Government which was directly under the influence of British industrialists.

9. If the Government borrows crores of rupees every year and constructs railways and canals out of these loans, it can as well encourage the growth of new industries by guaranteeing or subsidising such enterprises in their pioneering stage. It has done so successfully in pioneering tea, cinchona, and cotton enterprise in certain parts, and it can well extend the scope of its operations in other and more fruitful directions. It can also very well be asked to produce its own stores here, just as it produces certain minor articles required by its military and postal departments. It can also undertake to buy leather, woollen goods, etc., from the Indian producer, and thus secure the benefit of a sure custom at remunerative rates to new undertakings. It can finally help people to join their capital together under such guarantees and official supervision, and afford such special facilities as the Governments of Europe have extended to land improvement banks.—(E. 183)

10. What is now suggested is, that similar efforts in other directions than agricultural development should be made, not at state expense departmentally, but on the plan followed in the case of Railways by guaranteeing or subsidising private efforts till private enterprise could support itself, or better still, by the plan followed in the Netherlands India by advancing loans to private capitalists at low interest and helping them in the choice of places and the selection of the form of investment. The British Government in India recognizes the principle of making advances for improvements to agriculturists, known as tagai advances, but this power is so niggardly exercised that it may virtually be said to have been ignored in practice—(E. 85)

Education, not only literary but industrial, was the only activity that Ranade would urge on such a government without much offence to their prejudices. The progress of mass education was very unsatisfactory in Ranade's days and technical education had hardly started. In the absence of any industrial policy the provision of technical education would by itself not have helped much. But the supply of trained labour is an important asset and with national sentiment in favour of industrialisation and the natural advantages of resources and markets appreciable results could have been expected. Ranade was really a staunch protagonist of a direct development of industries by state action. Where the process of industrialisation has to be introduced in an old and populous country and has to be worked out at the quickest possible rate, co-ordinated and authoritative¹¹ efforts are necessary. Such a policy would serve the best interests of the people as well as of the state, where an identity of such interests could be presumed. Obviously the Government of India had other views in the matter and hence this natural, wise and advantageous policy did not appeal to them.

Knowing as he did the shortcomings of the policy of the Government of India and their position of helplessness in certain respects Ranade in outlining his proposals had more a critical and educative rather than a positive purpose to discharge. If the state was not prepared to take on itself the normal running of industrial concerns let it at any rate undertake pioneering efforts. As soon as an industry passed out of the experimental stage it could be handed over to private effort. In industries the pioneering of which is also left to individual businessmen the state could help by guaranteeing a reasonable return or by insuring them against serious loss in some other way. With a view to prevent industries from either taking

11. While we put forth our energies in these directions, we can well count upon the assistance of the state in regulating our co-operative efforts by helping us to form deposit and finance banks, and facilitating recoveries of advances made by them, by encouraging new industries with guarantees or subsidies, or loans at low interest, by pioneering the way to new enterprises, and by affording facilities for emigration and immigration, and establishing technical institutes and buying more largely the stores that we require here, and in many cases by producing their own stores.—(E. 187)

unfair advantage of such a policy or from falling into avoidable inefficiency, competent state supervision could be provided. If the state in any one of these alternative ways, which caused differing degrees of offence to the let-alone policy, could be persuaded to ease a little the burden of the people over whom it was called upon to rule, the process of industrialisation, with which were inseparably connected the hopes of providing against poverty and insecurity, could be achieved, within a fairly short time. But the task of modernising the economy of the country had for Ranade such supreme national importance that he urged his countrymen courageously to put their hands to it even if the state preferred to remain aloof. With Government aid if possible, without Government aid if necessary, let us all unite to industrialise¹² our nation. This was his innermost conviction and appeal to all Indians. Who can say that even now the appeal has been rendered either pointless or superfluous?

Even a free trade and let-alone policy needs to be watched as to the effects that it produces, unless the so-called liberal policy is only another name for neglect and indifference. Taking the Government at its word, that it was following the policy of economic liberalism, which consists in allowing individuals to work out their own economic ends in their own ways, Ranade suggested that a separate department¹³ should be set up to keep in touch with the fortunes of commerce and industry. In later days these and other departments have been added to the central and some provincial governments. But in Ranade's days even the slightest deviation from the purely administrative sphere was suspected of deep laid plots, for undermining the economic privileges of the better equipped foreign competitors. Ranade's suggestion,

12. State help is after all a subordinate factor in the problem. Our own exertion and our own resolutions must conquer the difficulties which are chiefly of our own creation.—(E. 187).

13. The factories should also be guaranteed continuous and certain demand for their produce at fixed prices, which should include not only the English prices in England, but ship freight, landing and railway charges, and insurance and exchange. A separate department of commerce and manufactures can alone devote itself to this work without frequent oscillations of purpose.—(E. 171-72).

it will be seen, was not intended to cover only the starting of a particular department. In its organisation, no less than in its policy, he wanted the state to be industrially minded. Even today we are far away from that objective. In his own day Ranade's was a cry which evoked no response from quarters that really mattered.

Ranade did not desire that the state should take upon itself a responsibility which would be discharged as well or even better by private effort. Hence he would as a rule leave economic activity to be carried out by the individual proprietors themselves. In a large part of the distributive and subsidiary trades he had no doubt that individual private effort would be the best way of organising business. Both for efficiency of service as also for the conditions of remuneration this would be a desirable policy. Where individuals in themselves were not likely to supply all the resources of capital and enterprise needed for a given business he would welcome the formation of joint stock companies. He was too good a student of modern business organisation to miss the advantage of encouraging and pooling together the savings of the people. Modern industrialisation cannot proceed without capital, and in any but the communistic or other authoritarian states, savings have to be induced by institutional appeals. The provision of a fairly wide field for private enterprise individually and voluntarily organised, is necessary to bring forth the available supply of capital. Quite apart from the need for capital there was the need for enterprise. A large section of private industry, organised and domestic, serves as a cheap and efficient school for the development of industrial leadership and enterprise. Ranade did not want to forego this advantage even for his collective planning.

Partly because he wanted all governmental organisation to have an industrial and businesslike bias and partly because he hoped to get the local bodies to do what he despaired of getting from the central and provincial governments, Ranade suggested¹⁴

14. Even if the Government be not prepared to take this risk on its own shoulders from fear of English criticism and jealousy, a way might be found giving effect to arrangements proposed on a small scale by empowering the existing Local or Municipal Boards or creating Special Corporate Boards of Trade and Commerce to borrow from the Government at low interest the moneys required and advance them as loans for the improvement of rural and urban industries.—(E. 90-91)

that municipalities and local boards should play an active part in promoting the industrial progress of their respective areas. Whether we consider the traditional duties of such corporations or the advantages now claimed for municipal trading the suggestion of Ranade appears to be very farsighted. Local bodies would be real centres of communal life and welfare if they touch the people's life at vitally important points. Even now our local bodies, especially in the rural areas, fail to evoke interest and enthusiasm. If, however, the business interests of citizens are taken care of and promoted by the local councils they would be able to evoke the best talent and resources that the people can afford. The prospects of success would also be greater if the industrial effort which individuals cannot by themselves undertake is done through the wider association of citizens under the authority of the local body. Local bodies could indeed not replace the state as the supreme co-ordinator of national economy. But in the series of institutions charged with appropriate and widening economic functions local bodies according to Ranade had an important part to play.

So instinctive was Ranade's preference for communal or collective organisation that he exhorted the capitalists to form themselves into district committees¹⁵ of economic development. Right from an economic survey to the financing of promising concerns all functions were to be undertaken by these bodies. Their operations were to be under the supervision and wherever necessary under the control of the state. This was a precaution against monopolistic exploitation. In return for the public-spirited enterprise of the district trade boards they were to receive special facilities and encouragement from the state. With a view to maintain contact bet-

15. All that Government has to do is to organise district or city committees of Indian capitalists, to empower them to receive deposits at fixed rates and lend them at slightly higher rates to the borrowers on the security of lands or houses, etc., the excess rate providing for a gradual amortization of the debt in a definite period, as also insurance charges and working expenses. The loans of these district committees should be allowed priority over all other debts and exempted from all duties, and certain and speedy execution should be permitted to them.—(E. 60).

ween the departments of Government charged with the responsibility of supervision and assistance the board was to contain some representatives of Government. For industries or economic efforts which would make too great a call on the capacities of a single district board an inter-district arrangement could be thought of. A territorially and functionally organised industrial structure was after Ranade's heart and he wanted the state to take a leading part in organising it.

The spirit of industrialism appeared to Ranade to be the most important single influence favouring the modernisation of a nation's economy. He knew that for the mass of the people such a spirit can have a meaning only when the process of industrialisation has been on the way for a considerably long while. But the leaders of thought and action must concentrate on the industrial idea in advance of the initiation of the process. Besides this psychological influence there were the four factors of production. As regards land or natural resources Ranade held, as has been noted earlier, that the situation in India was very favourable. In any case its shortcomings were such as could be compensated by our advantages in skill and easy access to the markets. As for labour the general body of workers available in India was at once cheap, plentiful and skilful. Technical skill may have to be specially imparted and in the initial stages the importing of foreign trained personnel may at certain points be necessary. The discipline and sustained effort that are needed for efficient industrial production may be expected to grow as the new methods of production come to be established. Enterprise as an industrial asset is widely available among the commercial classes of the country. What is needed is a diversion of this talent into the new industrial avenues.

As soon as initial familiarity with large scale industry is acquired Indian enterprisers will take to industry as fish take to water. The uncertainty and apprehension felt with regard to the economic policy of the state are the real obstacles to the progress of Indian enterprise. So soon as the friendly nature of state policy is known the natural enterprise of the business community can be trusted to assert itself. This leaves us with capital as the remaining factor of production. Unlike the

general run of writers on this subject Ranade held that the supply of capital in India was not inadequate. What was needed was a diversion of the saving from the hordes or from other channels. In the initial stages foreign capitalists may be allowed to do business. This, in the absence of any constructive lead from the state itself, would be the only means of creating confidence. Co-operation between British and Indian capitalists to promote large scale industry in India should, therefore, be promoted. The unproductive use of wealth in India was an accompaniment of the undeveloped stage of economic evolution. When developments in industrial organisation are an assured prospect the habits of the people may change. Government balances, bank resources and the capital of the rich and saving classes could all be counted upon for bringing about the maximum of industrialisation. Once the process of successful industrialisation was on the way it would feed on its own produce. Thus Ranade had thought out and planned for every single aspect of the industrialisation of the country by which he placed such great store.

In his detailed plan of industrialisation Ranade followed two basic principles. One was the preference for staple industries rather than for luxury trades. For this very reason, at any rate in the earlier stages of industrialisation, Ranade did not favour the diversion of national resources to highly specialised industries, unless such a course was indicated by defence considerations. The history of past achievements of Indian artisans as also the fluctuating fortunes of such modern economies as the French, bear out the wisdom of Ranade's caution. If a luxury or specialised trade is able to hold its own without any special assistance from the community there indeed was no objection to its development. It would be both a natural and advantageous disposal of the nation's economic resources. But anything in the nature of special sacrifice, though it may be only temporary, should primarily be undergone for such industries as have a wide and stable demand. Especially in a large and populous continent like India the foundations of national economy can be well laid on the domestic demand for a large number of necessary wants. Where the supply of raw materials was also locally produced there would be a double advantage in preferring a staple to a luxury trade.

This brings us to the second principle that Ranade desired to follow. Our industrialisation ought to grow naturally not only out of our needs but also out of our special advantages. Though a protectionist, it will be seen from this emphasis, Ranade was not an indiscriminate protectionist. Least of all was he a protagonist of any given class. He suggested that we should find out what raw materials and minerals we are even now producing on a large scale and we should try and build up industries round about these supplies. This would not only supply a profitable local market to the primary producers but would also insure the manufacturers against unpredictable disturbances. Incidentally the closer touch established between the modernised industry on the one hand and the old type agriculturists on the other would have an energising influence on the latter. The thorough re-organisation of the agricultural industry that is to be desired as a foundation for a businesslike structure of the nation's economy would thus be easily promoted.

As a rough guide to the promising spheres of new but natural industrialisation Ranade suggested an examination of the current import and export schedules. Wherever there was a marked case of a considerable export of raw material counterbalanced by a corresponding import of finished product further examination of the possibility of establishing the manufacture in our own country was clearly indicated. He outlined his scheme in the form of a table* thus :—

In place of exporting.	Convert them into & export.
Oil seeds.	Oils.
Dye stuffs.	Dyes and pigments.
Wheat.	Flour.
Unhusked rice.	Husked Rice.
Jaggery.	Sugar.
Raw Cotton.	Cotton goods.
Raw Wool.	Woollen goods and shawls.
Raw Silk	Silk goods.
Jute and flax.	Gunny bags, ropes.
Hides and skins	Prepared and tanned leather.
Raw Tobacco.	Tobacco cured and cigars.
Fish.	Cured and salted fish.
Rags.	Paper.
Wood and timber.	Carved wood and furniture.

Technological progress within and outside India as also the changing currents of international trade have modified the position of individual items in the above-noted illustration. But the underlying policy is still the soundest and most natural line to take in exploring the possibilities of successful industrialisation.

A possible misunderstanding that may be created by the argument that it is generally advantageous to manufacture locally the raw products of the country requires to be guarded against. Ranade did not by any means desire to set limits to Indian industrialisation. He had no inhibition against either importing the raw materials when necessary or exporting raw or finished products wherever possible. Indian resources of material, men and money were to be systematically surveyed with a view to organising them for their most profitable utilisation in the domestic as well as the foreign market. Neither for imports nor for exports did he set any geographical or political limits. He was aware of the full implications of the new world economy that was emerging under the influence of scientific progress and the growth of communications. He only desired that in the new world India should be ready and equipped to play the active and important role that nature wanted her to play. In place of a ruralised dependent economy such as India then had to show, he hoped to see an industrialised and prosperous nation.

Of the industries in the detailed problems of which Ranade had occasion to go, two have already made good. Both iron and sugar were from the first realised to be very promising industries. Partly owing to ill-developed technological knowledge but mostly on account of the unhelpful policy of the state even these industries could not be well established till after the first World War. In the case of the iron and steel industry Government had at an earlier stage interested themselves in the effort. But their policy was both half-hearted and inconsistent. No heavy industry can hope to run successfully unless it is assured of a steady national support. The occasion for support may not arise and the form and size of the assistance needed may also vary. But the assurance of steady patronage of Government goes a long way in putting an indus-

try on its legs. In the case of sugar restrictions on the use of bye-products have always created an almost insurmountable difficulty. It is true that besides the shortcomings of state policy these industries had in the old days also to struggle with some knotty technological problems. It is only a combination of favourable technical and administrative circumstances that has helped them to make good progress under the recent regime of protective duties.

The fortunes of the iron and steel and sugar industries have emphasised an aspect of Indian industrialisation which was also considered by Ranade. So long as the main industry of the people is agriculture there is an almost natural selection of the most advantageous areas for the different crops. As for industry, the simple subsidiary arts prevail in all parts, and the specially skilled ones tend to be located where they have the best patronage. In an industrialised economy, however, besides natural conditions and patronage, such factors as capital, transport and labour come to play a significant part. As the location of industry is ultimately dependent on the resulting prospect of profit, a strictly natural or geographical choice of locality is no longer available. Industry follows raw material, labour, finance, patronage or market, just as the promoters may anticipate the prospect of profit. Besides there is always the possibility of an established industry in one part using its position of advantage to stifle the efforts of new industrialists in other parts of the country. Ranade felt that the artificial localisation brought about either by private monopoly or by state subsidy was harmful to the best economic interests of the nation. In a protected industry an additional factor of supreme importance is introduced. In awarding the advantages of state patronage an attempt ought to be made to see that the legitimate prospects of industrialisation of the different regions are not artificially marred. Both for iron and steel as also for sugar Ranade expected a distribution of factories all over the country.

Of the other industries which Ranade expected and desired to see well established at an early date one has made striking progress already. In many specialised types of paper India is still dependent on foreign supplies. But there are now

numerous paper factories in the country and they are supplying a good portion of the local demand. The production of dyes is a matter that will depend upon a further development of the chemical industry. In respect of oils, leather and tobacco, however, a greater progress than what has already been made could have been expected. Recent events are helping a more intensive utilisation of local products for local industry. If the same tendencies are allowed to operate after the present extraordinary times have come to an end the hope of Ranade will, in one respect at any rate, be fulfilled. "Do not export in the raw state what you can locally utilise for domestic or foreign consumption, and do not import in the finished state what you can locally work up either out of local or imported material." This was Ranade's prescription. Followed with discrimination such as Ranade's own, it would certainly yield a stable and striking progress of industry.

The social side of modern industrialism had also attracted the very close attention of Ranade. He had realised on the technical side the necessity of the state playing an active part in the rapid and systematic industrialisation of the country. For this as well as for wider reasons of social policy Ranade desired that the state should take continued interest in all the social consequences of the altered structure of economic life. Wherever the interests of important classes were being sacrificed for social development either during a period of transition or for a longer time the state was to interfere so as to regulate the course of industrialisation in such a way as to cause the least avoidable hardship. Not only did Ranade favour the whole scheme of factory legislation, but, in some form or other, he advocated the revival of the old widespread system of poor relief. This is one of the most glaring shortcomings of our social policy. On account of the unsettling effect produced on the corporate nature of village life the old system of voluntary relief of poverty has received a rude shock. In the urban areas on account of the very size of the population the sense of responsibility among the more fortunate classes for relief of misery is not so acute as it once was. In any case there is no organisation to drive the flow of private charity into the most deserving channels.

Whatever the difficulties may be in the path of working out a satisfactory system of poor relief, the principle of social responsibility in the matter has got to be immediately recognised. It may be that this problem will not be easily solved in India through the channels of taxation alone. The strong tradition in favour of humanitarianism that pervades all classes, including the commercial, ought to be organised by local initiative. Unless the progress of industrialism is watched so as to prevent the evil of misery and inequality capitalistic industry may indeed prove to be a curse. This has been realised by all the nations of the modern world. Ranade was never in doubt as to the social implications of capitalism. Not only in respect of poor relief but generally in the matter of distribution of wealth he held that a redistribution of wealth from the rich to the poor was not only permissible, but also necessary. The only limiting considerations were that the more efficient and enterprising classes should not be touched to such an extent as to lose interest in their business and that the manner of redistribution to the less capable or more unlucky should not be such as to undermine their own self-respect and initiative.

Whether we look at the regulating and co-ordinating function of the state or we assess the pros and cons of a scheme of redistribution Ranade's place was definitely among the sober state socialists.¹⁶ He was, as has been mentioned in an earlier chapter, a social reformer in the widest sense of the term. He desired that there should be not only an assurance of non-intervention provided for each social unit, but that each individual should be supplied with socially available means of making good his own capacities. Ranade was too good a nationalist and too convinced a supporter of social justice to tolerate the evils of unchecked and individualistic capitalism. In keeping with his ideas of evolving the new out of the old with as little shock to the social system as was necessary he advocated gradualism rather than revolution. He did this not because he was afraid of violent changes but

16. Without subscribing to the Marxist dogmas of a class war and economic interpretation of history the state socialists try to regulate by state action the progress of capitalism so as to avoid unjustifiable inequality and waste.

because he knew them to be more costly and less effective methods of social advancement. Social welfare and social justice were to be the objects of deliberate policy on the part of the state.

Against the institution of private property as such he had no fundamental objection. If anything, he was eager to utilise it to the full to bring out the best that there was in each individual. It was with this end in view that he advocated a scheme by which even tenants should be enabled to earn rights of proprietorship in land. It was occasionally suggested that the system of primogeniture should be introduced in India with a view to retain properties with single owners and thus to encourage the accumulation of capital. Ranade was, however, opposed to the idea. Such a proposal was inconsistent with the religious and social traditions of the people. Even the economic advantage of the innovation in the light of paucity of alternative employments was doubtful. And the consequences with regard to social inequality would be almost certainly disastrous. For economic as also for social welfare a certain amount of equality of opportunity is to be desired. Ranade was not prepared to do away with the traditional policy of equal sharing of accumulated wealth, though he had no inherent objection to inequalities developing on account of differences of efficiency. When these passed beyond the desired limit the state would intervene with its policy of redistribution.

It is clear from this redistributive function allotted to the state by Ranade that he had a very much more comprehensive outlook on the financial policy of the Government than merely meeting the expenses of essential public departments. One glaring drawback in Indian financial policy, which indeed has not altogether vanished even to the present day, was severely criticised by Ranade. While Indian poverty was proverbial not only were the finances of the state almost always satisfactory but the scales of expenditure were very heavy. This was a contradiction which was unnatural and was a reflection of the abnormal political arrangements in the country. A strong and prosperous foreign nation having established its government in India was tempted to keep up the level of expenditure

on almost a sumptuous scale. As, however, the country itself was poor, such a policy of exploitation necessitated two undesirable steps. The levels of taxation had to be kept at as high a level as politically the government was prepared to do and the activities of the several departments, beyond what were necessary for the essential functions of the state and for the benefit of the governing class, had to be restricted to a minimum.

This financial policy resulted in securing for the people a minimum of service for the maximum taxation. Such a continued heavy taxation, not balanced by developmental and nationally beneficent activity, made for the increasing poverty of the people. As the Government of India had often to borrow from the London market they were very keen on reducing their borrowings for unproductive purposes and on maintaining budgetary equilibrium at all costs. Extraordinary items of expenditure¹⁶ such as the costs of frontier wars were often met out of taxation. Once a tax was levied even in extraordinary circumstances, it was rarely removed. Thus rackrenting of people was the order of the day. In a country where the main industry of the people was extensive agriculture heavy taxation necessarily meant a high land revenue and regressive taxation generally. Whatever the principles of the land revenue settlement may be, in practice every fresh settlement had the effect of wiping out all the improved prospects due to either enhanced productivity or rising prices. The peasantry had lost all interest in improving agriculture and had no margin of profit at all. In fact on account of the increasing pressure on land, taxes had to be paid out of the slender earnings of labour rather than out of any profit.

For all these evils of the tax system, which pressed heavily on national production without doing much to improve the

16. The Government of India, when it adopted the policy of constructing productive works out of borrowed capital, did in fact affirm the principle that, in the peculiarly backward condition of the country, the development of its resources could not be left to independent private enterprise, and that as representing the general public, it was bound to utilise public resources of credit and its superior intelligence and organization for the advantage of its subjects by undertaking to be the great railway and canal constructors in the country.—(E. 82).

developmental capacities of the people, Ranade had a plan of reform. He would confine taxation only to current needs, all extraordinary expenditure being met out of borrowings. As regards expenditure itself he was in favour of lowering the scale of salaries to a level proportionate to Indian needs and capacities. He also favoured a simplification of the system of administration. As regards the main source of revenue, as the land tax was in Ranade's days, he suggested that a permanent settlement in terms of a quantity of produce should be made with the landholders. Every twenty or thirty years, the amount in money for which the quantity of produce is commuted should be revised in keeping with the level of prices. Such a settlement will not repeat the grosser drawbacks of the permanent land revenue settlement of Bengal, and would leave to the cultivating owner a clear incentive to improve the total productivity of his field. This step is about the only reform that is compatible at once with the needs of public revenue and the interests of a healthy national economy. Had it been adopted when Ranade, in common with some other Indian publicists, urged it, the agricultural situation would not have been so menacing as it is now. As has been observed in the preceding chapter, the prospects of an agrarian revolution in India are closely related to creating an assured prospect of gain among those employed in the agricultural industry. Unless an assurance in the matter of taxation, prices and tenure is forthcoming the agricultural industry will continue to be as depressed as ever. And so long as the agricultural industry is depressed there is no sure foundation for any healthy or reliable superstructure of industrialisation. We must build from the foundation. In laying down the foundation of progressive and profitable agriculture the land revenue policy of the state has an important part to play.

A comprehensive, systematic and constructive economic policy was the crying need of the country. Ranade offered the broad outlines¹⁷ of such a policy, but produced little effect on

17. When the country was thus enabled to obtain a new start, and factories and mills on a small or large scale were set up all over the land, the present paralysis would give way to a play of energies which would far more effectively than schools and colleges give a new birth to the activities of the nation. This then is our plan.—(E. 92).

the government of the day. In later years there has been some improvement in the attitude of the state. The provincial Governments have become much more responsive to popular policies and even the central Government is led by events to play a more active role in the economic sphere. We are yet far away from the stage at which a national plan can emerge and be authoritatively adopted. Thought, however, is definitely veering towards that end. When the stage of authoritative adoption of the principle of planning is reached all that Ranade had to suggest on the various economic topics will be still found to be very serviceable. From the activities of the non-official planning committee set up some time ago it is clear that Ranade's constructive contribution to India's economic progress has been, by no means, left unregarded.

CHAPTER VII

THE STATE

✓“The state after all exists to make individual members composing it nobler, happier, richer and more perfect in every attribute with which we are endowed.”✂(M. 172).

Ranade's dissent from the extreme tenets of British individualism, which was evident in his views on political economy, was equally prominent in his views on politics. In fact the dissentient position that he occupied as an economist was a natural corollary of his political faith. ✓As a student of the origin and nature of human organisation Ranade felt convinced that the group or the community has an organic and moral unity which transcends the physical and intellectual separateness of each individual. While each individual is at once the agent and object of state action the purpose of the latter is to induce in the group such life as is collectively considered to be desirable. It is this need for a collective life that gives to society both moral and political priority.✓

Prior to the divisions of society into many smaller associations the group was the unit of social life. Both for defence and for acquiring material resources the group had to act as a unit. The cultural traits that developed in such a state of social evolution were naturally imbued with a strong emphasis on social unity and with a warning against the dangers of wayward individual action. With the increase in population and in the size of territory which took place for the most part on account of military and economic causes the need for holding the group together for ordinary economic and social life was less acutely felt. Hence the divisions into big and small families and even the recognition of individual status became possible. In the old tribal state the individual had a subject status. In any case his position was always on the defensive when he differed from the common rule. With the splitting up of society into smaller social units the individual came to be recognised as a constituent unit of social organisation.

It will be observed, and Ranade was keen on emphasising the historical process, that the unity of the group was not to be construed as being broken by the new social sub-divisions. New institutions were organised to give a fuller expression to the varied interests in respect of which unity was realised on a differing scale. Economic factors were tending towards making a division more helpful to the material strength of the community. Even hunting as a communal activity would show diminishing returns at some point. Pastoral pursuits would also necessitate a division of the pack pretty early. But when it came to settled agriculture the need for apportioning means of production to smaller units of population must have been obvious. Even where the common field system of cultivation was followed not only had parishes or village communities to be separately grouped and settled on clearly marked portions of the country, but even within the parishes proprietorship or holding on some tenure had to be recognised. Once the principle of attachment of separate groups, sub-groups and individuals to a portion of ground was recognised ownership and social sub-division inevitably followed. The nature and extent of this process of sub-division were governed partly by military and partly by economic causes. In an agricultural state, where the military arts were still rudimentary, feudalism and its thinly disguised imitations were the prototypes of social organisation. Political status was inferred from relation to land and military obligations were proportioned to tenure.

With the transformation of the feudal into an industrial society a great change came over the entire principle of social organisation. Thanks to internal peace and to expanding foreign commerce, the industrial arts and commercial pursuits also began to attract considerable attention. Especially on the advent of improved processes of production the entire balance of economic importance was changed. Other pursuits more important than, or at least as important as agriculture, were found to enrich the community. Significant means of production in their case were other than land and especially with the growth of commerce the handiest way of holding command over these means was found to be the possession of

money. When mechanical inventions rendered the large-scale exploitation of economic resources possible capitalism was born. As, however, the urge to economic progress was too strong either to wait upon the enlightenment of the whole nation or to be organised within well-established social forms, the shape that capitalism took was that of individualistic or unregulated capitalism. England was the first among nations to undergo an industrial revolution and it did so with an individualistic social system. For nearly two centuries the influence of English example has worked in the direction of glorifying individual claims and contributions to the detriment of social union and collective needs.

Ranade was conscious of the special implications of this process of the transformation of English society. He was also aware of the fact that, much as Bentham and the other British utilitarians might extol individualism and decry state interference, the strong common sense and patriotism of the British people always assert themselves before it is too late. May we not benefit by the real experience of Britain and other European societies in organizing our country? While recognising that the needs of economic progress required loosening of old bonds may we not remember that, whatever the form of organisation unless it is recognised to be socially necessary and unless the supreme social purpose of collective welfare is assured, it would be dangerous to accept unreservedly the principle of individualism? Social unity and collective welfare are to be retained not because they are old, but because they are primary. Anything that cuts at these vital bonds of human existence is inherently and ultimately undesirable.

It will be observed from this line of reasoning, which was implicit in many a political and social argument urged by Ranade, that he was no friend of unchecked or doctrinaire individualism. It is even more significant of the independence and soundness of his position that he was equally unfriendly to Hegelian idealism. To worship the state as an idea, to bow before existing arrangements as the crystallised wisdom of the eternal society, to confuse a law as it stands with the real or the rational will of the people, to look upon the agents of existing state authority as clothed with the garments of

sovereign power and to deny to individual citizens of each generation the freedom to think and act according to their best judgment—all these were for Ranade unthinkable. Such a position as that of the traditional Hegelian would have appeared to Ranade as tribal mysticism or glorified absolutism. He was by conviction as well as by instinct opposed to both of these.✓

✓ Ranade believed in the organic unity of the state. But this unity for him was not a fact, apart from the individuals who actually formed the state.✓ Unity, freedom, welfare, strength and the other qualities of the state,✓ had to be realised by and through the citizens themselves. Unless the individual citizen in his own life experienced and exercised these qualities Ranade was not prepared to accept them as real. He recognised the presumptive authority of the state as embodying the permanent and collective elements in organised human life.¹ He would not, however, surrender normal human functions and needs to its unquestioned authority. If the state is a real organism and not a merely mystical idea the citizens are its operative limbs. The co-ordination and organisation of these limbs was a matter which✓ would be differently brought about in different societies. But the citizens of a state at any time and place must be presumed to be the principal agent and object of collective action.✓

That Ranade had observed in proper perspective the rise of British individualism, and its rationalised transformation the British Utilitarianism, has already been noted. He was especially warned against a too trustful acceptance of these theories by the actual record of these tenets in the life of England and of other countries which trusted themselves to an indiscriminate adoption of the resulting policy of social inaction. Human nature being what it is and differences among individuals being what they are, all societies which

1. Those who feel the full force of the ethical and political causes mentioned above, and also feel how necessary it is at certain stages of man's progress to secure the assertion of right ideas by the highest sanctions, advocate to some extent the help of State regulation, as representing the highest and most disinterested wisdom of the times, working to give effect to the other tendencies, concentrating and popularizing them.—(M. 77).

we know, or which we can think of, give rise to inequalities and occasions for exploitation. In an imperfect world neither perfect equality nor perfect justice can be attained. But whenever we come across a case of avoidable inequality or exploitation it becomes the elementary duty of the state to remove it. Such a duty on the part of the state is no less urgent than the need for free individual initiative and action. By neglecting this truth extreme individualists tolerated and encouraged the gross abuses of early capitalism in England. ✓

England's example tended to influence thought and action in many other parts of the world, with the result that individual liberty degenerated into economic and social license and non-intervention of the state amounted to social indifference and irresponsibility. The evils associated with the factory system, with land and share speculation, and with the emergence of the two nations of "haves and have-nots" are all traceable to this mistaken political faith of the liberal philosophers. That this faith in absolute liberty was exploited by interested parties to their own ends was clear from the economic propaganda associated with Manchester. The evil effects of the prevailing political thought were witnessed in an extremely perverse form in India. While the state assumed a general attitude of unconcern in matters of economic and social reform, because such a pose suited both their inclination and interest, it did not shirk from intervening where under the influence of Manchester it saw an opportunity of mitigating the competitive advantages of Indian industry. At a time when British theoretical opinion had assumed the extreme position that even if foreign competitors were dumping goods into England it would be no occasion for the interference of the state, conditions of work in Indian factories were regulated partly because they were bad in themselves and partly because they constituted unfair competition to British producers.

That labour legislation was undertaken in India much earlier because of the influence of Manchester is a well-known fact and the need for such legislation is inherently so sound that Ranade had nothing but approval for that step. But the Government was unwilling to follow to the full the implica-

tions of the regulating and protective policy that ostensibly lay behind that step. Regulation of labour conditions, either here or in Great Britain, was for Ranade no exception to a general policy of non-intervention. Freedom and regulation were not only not contradictory but were actually complementary. Unless a state is organised on a thorough appreciation of the respective and proportionate merits of both these principles it lends itself to be used as an instrument of inequity. If maintenance of law and order are made the be-all and end-all of state policy, as the protagonists of the police state would have us do, the state in effect not only tolerates but actually abets injustice. Economic and social advantages gathered on account of the comparative helplessness of weaker parties is sanctioned and protected by the state.

The policy of non-intervention and of leaving a free field for individual action which the state followed amounted in practice to an indifference for social welfare. In the initial stages of the progress of democratic government it was practical politics to pursue this policy. Most of those who were enfranchised had an interest in perpetuating the regime of mere police state. With the advent, however, of a wide, if not universal franchise, power to interfere came to be vested in hands which were themselves the victims of the negative policy. It is possible that in a few cases they were also guided by their own sectional or class interest. Once the liberal state had undone the prestige of the principles of social unity and collective responsibility it was well-nigh impossible to get the ordinary man to think in terms of society as a whole. If the citizen belonged to the middle or higher classes he was influenced by his own individual interests; if he belonged to the working classes his concern for individual welfare was grouped with his attachment to the common grievances and interests of his class. The doctrine of class war was forced by material circumstance upon the citizens of a state which refused to think and act collectively.

After the evils of this unnatural policy had been brought home to western nations by actual experience an attempt has now to be made to reconstruct a mental atmosphere of social

union and collective welfare. The differing forms under which collective, as opposed to individualistic, regimes are now organised are baffling in the details of their structure. All however, are attempts to undo the mischief done by the individualistic state. In some of the modern reactions to individualism the pendulum of political feeling has obviously swung to the other extreme. Along with the evil of self-centred individualism, the good of individual consciousness and freedom is also being extinguished. This is causing a conflict of internal and international interests which has radically unsettled the world. ✓Ranade emphasised the virtues of patriotism and social solidarity no less than those of individual freedom. In fact, as has been observed in an earlier chapter, the fundamental unity of human life, to put it no higher, made such a deep impression on Ranade that the reality of the greater whole was to him as important as the urgency of the individual's own betterment. ✓

Integrated political life of the individual and the state gave Ranade the proper approach to the desirable functions of the state. He was not prepared to set any arbitrary limits to the functions of the state.² As has been mentioned in earlier chapters social as well as economic reform was for Ranade quite a legitimate field for the activity of the state. ✓Judging merely on grounds of political competence Ranade would have no objection to the state undertaking all the functions of human life as organised in societies. He was, however, convinced that virtue, happiness and progress were truly realised only in so far as they are the result of conscious effort on the part of the individual citizens themselves³. To enable the

2. The State is now more and more recognized as the national organ for taking care of national needs in all matters in which individual and co-operative efforts are not likely to be so effective and economical as national effort. This is the correct view to take of the true functions of a State. To relegate them to the simple duty of maintaining peace and order is really to deprive the community of many of the advantages of the social union.—(E. 31-32).

3. The State after all exists only to make individual members composing it nobler, happier, richer and more perfect in every attribute with which we are endowed; and this perfection of our being can never be insured by any outside arrangement, however excellent, unless the individual member concerned is in himself prepared in his own private social sphere of duties to co-operate in his own well-being,—(M. 172).

citizen to make such an effort was the proper function of the state. Those parts of individual and collective life which can be well conducted without regulation or help by state action are best left to the individual and group effort⁴. But where full private effort is hampered by social restrictions, or where private effort is likely to be inefficient or harmful, the state had to step in and help the situation as much as its resources would permit. ✓

This principle of a general co-ordinating and directing role of the state was to apply according to Ranade's scheme to all departments of social life. The usual duties of the state such as law and order, justice and finance were to be so conducted as to give to the people a maximum of effective service at the least cost. In the economic sphere he urged the state to assume industrial initiative and direction. Especially in a country like India where the forces of conservatism and inertia are traditionally stronger than the desire to reform and to progress, the state is the only proper agency through which reform may be soonest brought about. In such a society as the Indian where some kind of authoritarian sanction is demanded for almost all things state action in the field of reform becomes not only permissible, but almost indispensable. In common with experience in other countries India would also figure in a scheme of state action designed to check the evils of monopolistic control. Wherever real competition was expected to prevail and was considered to be in the best interests of society it would be permitted. But in all other spheres the full responsibility of initiation, direction and control would be taken over by the state.

In view of many a latter-day tendency towards the emergence of regulated economies, and the fruition of state-induced

4. Whenever there is a large amount of unredressed evil suffered by people who cannot adopt their own remedy, the State has a function to regulate and minimize the evil, if by so regulating it, the evil can be minimized better than by individual effort and without leading to other worse abuses. The State in its collective capacity represents the power, the wisdom, the mercy and charity, of its best citizens. What a single man, or a combination of men, can best do on their own account, that the State may not do, but it cannot shirk its duty if it sees its way to remedy evils, which no private combination of men can check adequately or which it can deal with more speedily and effectively than any private combination of men can do.-(M. 78)

industrial revolutions Ranade's outlook on the economic functions of the state will seem to be extremely far-sighted and sound. Having allowed such a prominent share to the state in the field of production it is not surprising to know that Ranade set no limits at all to the redistributive functions of the state. ✓ To take from the rich and to give to the poor in the measure in which such a course would be socially just was for him a necessary part of the duty of the state. Apart from purely humanitarian grounds which are common to all states, except where by a casuistic and perverse logic charity is made to appear as a sin of delusion and degradation, Ranade felt that the scheme of distribution needed to be remedied at the two ends, and that it was the duty of the state to apply this remedy as and when desirable. ✓

✓ The principle was, in effect, to stop all exploitation and to provide for all such minimum means of betterment as the resources of the community would allow. As has been stated earlier, Ranade favoured private property and free initiative as general principles leading to individual and collective betterment. Wherever the provision for private property or free enterprise resulted in the owner obtaining a price in excess of his due or 'supply price,' an element of socially unearned income crept into the payment. In the organisation of a big society small items of such socially undesirable earnings may perhaps have to be tolerated as an inevitable drawback in a system that was generally good. But flagrant cases of unearned or predatory earnings, the result either of accident or design, had to be stopped. The state is the only proper authority which can both discover such cases and deal with them. Either by direct regulation or by taxation the unearned surplus has to be diverted to the public exchequer. ✓

If we care for the unity of social and group life it follows that the state has a definite responsibility in the matter of an assured minimum of advantages for all its members. The actual content of this minimum will vary from community to community according to the efficiency of its economic system. The underlying duty of ensuring a minimum would, however, devolve on all. It is also possible that the assurance of even a low minimum would in some cases of extreme degradation

deter a person from exerting himself to the full. But the loss in moral and material value likely to be caused in this way would be immensely counterbalanced by the all-sided advantage which the mass of the people will enjoy by being better equipped to serve themselves and to serve the community. Much as Ranade favoured the notion of the state's responsibility in this matter of redistribution, he was far from suggesting any step by which either the urge of charity or of independence would be dulled. Institutional aids given to the poorer members of the community in a manner that was calculated to help them to help themselves appeared to Ranade to be the best way to ensure the blessings both of corporate satisfaction and individual self-help.

✓ That Ranade was very far from sharing in the mere police view of the functions of the state is clear from this reference to the developmental and redistributive functions that in his scheme of things properly devolved on the state. ✓ But this was for Ranade by no means the upper limit of the possibilities of state action. How very exalted was Ranade's view both about human life and the role of the state in that behalf will be seen by reference to another department of state activity, which was to be the highest that the state should aim at. The redistributive and developmental functions, if properly carried out, would bring within the reach of almost all citizens the means of their own betterment. But provision of means may not be enough. The taste for betterment and creative self-expression has to be fostered. The creative instinct at its cruder levels produces a very low type of civilisation. But by an educative process which would instruct the citizens in the higher values of a civilised life and would at the same time supply them the means of realising such a life for themselves, the highest possible level of civilisation would be secured on the broadest possible scale. ⁵

5. Liberties bestowed on us by foreigners are concessions forced on us by the force of circumstances. These are not really ours; they are possessions only and not developments. But when multitudes of people in different parts of the country yearn for a change in their social surroundings, and each in his place seeks to work it out at great sacrifice of his present interests, it can hardly be but that those yearnings and struggles must bear fruit.— (M. 210).

This civilising process was for Ranade the main task in which the state was to assist the individual. Such a task properly carried out would take away much of the bitterness of international relations. Ranade was a staunch Indian nationalist. He was not prepared to tolerate the slightest injustice done to the Indian nation. He set no limits to the material and moral progress that his countrymen by their own exertions could bring about. Any obstacles, of action or inaction, in the path of this endeavour of self-improvement would be criticised and opposed by Ranade. Even in the most vital and, to other people, exasperating controversies, Ranade never felt any bitterness either towards his Indian or British adversaries. He was prepared to carry the same spirit of tolerance in his dealings with other nations. He believed, and firmly believed, that India had a mission to perform both towards itself and towards the world at large. This mission was none other than the process of evolving an integrated human civilisation for itself, and to propagate it abroad much in the manner in which the old Aryan or Hindu civilisation spread over most parts of the then known world.

Ranade, however, would want the fulfilment of this mission to take place by a peaceful and natural process of conversion. Neither the mediaeval process of military conquest and occupation, nor its modern counterpart Imperialism and colonisation were to his liking. Live and let live, learn and educate, buy and sell—these were his mottoes. In his political scheme there would be a common government for the world to order common interests, and to allow of the peaceful evolution of culture and commerce. Wherever obstacles to such a process would be raised by selfish or mischievous forces these would be curbed by the world power. So long as there is no earthly prospect of such a godly state of things coming to pass each state must indeed provide for its effective defence. It must, however, refrain from encroachment on the just rights of other states. Ranade was a pacifist who was prepared to fight. Ranade was an internationalist who was prepared to stand up for the just claims of his own country. And last of all, he was a free trader who was prepared to protect his own industries so that they may hold their own against unfair competition.

From the statement that Ranade favoured a considerable extension of the activities of the state it may perhaps be inferred that his conception of the state was totalitarian. Such an inference would be utterly wrong and unfounded. In Ranade's scheme of political life free individual possessions and activity were not only tolerated but they were deliberately provided for. Even apart from the functions of the state, the organisation of government that made an almost instinctive appeal to Ranade was a constitutional democracy. Absolutism in any form or shape was repugnant to him not only on emotional or political, but also on moral grounds.⁶ Absolute rule, he believed, corrupted the rulers and degraded the governed. If the dignity of man had to be maintained, as it had to be, if he was to be the agent of a process of ennobling civilisation, it could only be in a free system of government. Knowing that there are different stages and degrees of the actual possession of knowledge, patriotism and responsibility, Ranade would not commit himself to any particular form of the constitution. He was, however, emphatic that the essential equality of men had to be recognised in our political arrangements. No uniform type of organisation would meet all the cases, but the essentials of a just, free and progressive government had to be provided for all.

The essential purpose of man's life, and therefore of all the institutions that men set up, must according to Ranade be a moral one. That people were to be rendered happy was only the first or the most obvious step. But they had also to be made nobler. While at its best a dictatorship may conceivably attain the first, it will never be able to attain the second and the more important end of state action. Nobody can have any traces of nobility about him if his thoughts and actions are not the results of his own voluntary choice exercised under normal conditions of freedom. The words 'normal conditions of freedom' require to be specially emphasised as at certain stages

6. One of the worst effects of absolute power is, that it warps men's perceptions in regard to the innate dignity of human nature and its common identity under all manner of extraneous disguises. The representatives of a ruling class soon learn to lisp the shibboleth of the natural and inherent superiority of European over Asiatic races.—(E. 227).

of continued existence of absolute rule the judgment of the subject population itself gets warped and stunted. Out of such a state of degradation it takes the sustained and inspired efforts of almost prophetic personalities to rouse an inert mass. Ranade, it may be parenthetically observed, was such a prophet for India's regeneration. But the excellence of a governmental system, he insisted, had to be judged by its operation under normal and free, not perverted and constrained conditions. The details of political organisations may vary with time, place and circumstance. But for a state with the high moral purpose, that Ranade outlined a constitutional and free government was the only fitting adjunct. How violently indeed must contemporary Indian experience have jarred on a mind which entertained such exalted ideas about the nature, functions and organisation of the state !

CHAPTER VIII

INDIAN POLITICS

If the lessons of the past have any value, one thing is quite clear, viz., that in this vast country no progress is possible unless both Hindus and Mahomedans join hands together and are determined to follow the lead of the men who flourished in Akbar's time and were his chief advisers and councillors, and sedulously avoid the mistakes which were committed by his great grandson Aurangzeb.— (M. 226).

At first sight it may appear rather surprising that Ranade who by profession was a member of the judicial service of the crown should have played such an important part in Indian politics. Many members of the present generation would remember him as a founder of the Indian National Congress. Even allowing for the fact that the Congress at its inception was a very much milder body of political protestants than it now is, this close association of officials with political organisation does seem striking. Ranade, however, was not the only official interested in the establishment and working of the Congress. Though there was a very keen difference of opinion among the officials and especially among the members of the civil service, over the desirability of encouraging officials to take even passive interest in the functioning of a major political body, the lead given from high was definitely favourable to such association. In course of time, partly due to change of supreme official personnel, this policy of sympathetic association with the political organisations of the people underwent a change. But those who had started their association with the Congress from its very inception were not disturbed. Ranade was a regular visitor at all sessions of the Congress and played an important part in shaping its policy.

If the establishment of the National Congress represented a crucial, almost a fateful, stage in the emergence of Indian nationalism it must be admitted that Englishmen of high standing played an important part in initiating the process. In

assessing Ranade's attitude towards the British nation, this fact which was real to him by first hand experience, ought to be given due weight. While he was conscious of all the shortcomings of the subject status of India, he had good reason to hope that not only in the estimation of Indian intelligentsia but also in that of the enlightened British people, this was no more than a period of trial and training. What better proof of the good faith of British protestations of disinterested policy could Ranade, or any of his contemporaries, desire to have, than this deliberate and open assistance in establishing the supreme national organ of India's new born national consciousness ?

Scratch a Maratha and you find in him a politician, was as true in Ranade's days as it is now. On account of the breadth of his sympathies and the vigour of his temperament Ranade had acquired public spirit in a rich measure. He was no isolationist either individually or socially. To identify himself with the life of the group in which his lot was cast was second nature with him, second because he had by study and deliberation convinced himself that man fulfils his mission best by such an identification. While discharging his official duties as a judge he was fulfilling the duties of his calling. His personality, however, was by no means exhausted in his official routine. He still felt the urge and the inclination to function as a citizen, who owes it to himself and to his fellow citizens to take as full an interest as was possible in the affairs of the state. With the lofty intellect, deep insight and prodigious industry that he possessed Ranade could discharge in his spare time more public duties than many a whole time politician has found it possible.

The passionate attachment that Ranade evinced for all activities of national character is only partially explained by his public spirit and political consciousness. Had he liked to act merely as a citizen of the Indian state he would not have felt for his public activity, at any rate for the political side of his public activity, the fervour of a national missionary that he actually evinced. Ranade as has been stated in an earlier chapter was at heart a pious man and a citizen of the world. He felt it his duty, he recognised it as his mission, not only to per-

fect his own personality by a long and arduous course of study and discipline, but also to secure for as many fellowmen of his as was possible, conditions in which they could perfect themselves and be fit and ready to discharge the high mission of human civilisation and progress. To us of the present generation, engrossed as most of us are with more urgent calls on our attention, this would appear to be no more than a high-flown feat of occasional enthusiasm. It would however be missing the central thread in all the thought and activity of Ranade to underrate the genuineness and strength of his deep conviction that he was discharging a holy mission and a very responsible task in helping forward the cause of India's all-sided progress including its political emancipation.

It is this unmistakable trait of spirituality in Ranade's approach to Indian politics that entitles him to a place among national prophets. He was no mere politician working at organisation, agitation and administrative reform. Ranade helped, directly and indirectly, many such efforts. But these were only a small and subsidiary part of his activity. Beyond the day's work as a politician there is the function of the statesman who has to take long range and comprehensive surveys of national problems and to outline high policies. Unless the politicians conform to the wider plans and policies of statesmen their activity is likely to result in confusion and conflict. Ranade was one of the very small number of his contemporaries who can be placed in the class of statesmen. As a statesman he took far-sighted, cautious and constructive views. Considered as an Indian he would be entitled to a very high place among Indian statesmen of all times. If Ranade's contribution to Indian politics is viewed as a piece of statesmanship and if it is compared with that of the statesmen of other countries and times, he would be found to rank among the greatest statesmen of the world.

One cannot be a mere patriot and still be a great statesman. Ranade was an ardent patriot and a statesman of high standing. He was moreover endowed with the capacity to see the problems of India during his own time against the background of the world process of evolution. He considered it his duty so to guide the course of events in India as to help forward the cause both of Indian and world

progress. Not only did he feel that he had a responsibility in this matter and on this scale but he was equal to the task of discharging it. Hence it is that Ranade is to be placed among the prophets, who are statesmen and politicians as occasion may require, but who still manage to keep themselves high above the work-a-day concerns of their immediate surroundings. In assessing, and even in understanding Ranade's views on Indian politics, this position of his has to be well appreciated.

The most outstanding fact about Indian political life is the connection between India and Great Britain. On the historical nature and political significance of this fact views have differed very violently. Some have seen in this bond a divine boon to a backward, disunited and impoverished people. It is felt by this school of thought that the British rule in India is not only natural and beneficent but is, in the interest of the Indian people themselves, to be welcomed. The avowed protagonists of this school are now much fewer than they were in Ranade's days. But it would be wrong to assume that this mode of thought has altogether lost its hold upon the people. On the other hand, there are many persons who see in British expansion in India no more than a successful case of Imperialism and infer that the consequences of this relationship for the subject nation are an unmitigated degradation out of which only a mass movement of revolution can, if at all, free the country. Ranade's position in this matter was unique, and perhaps for that very reason was susceptible of a good deal of misapprehension. While recognising the objectivity in the outlook of the latter school which put its finger on the drawbacks of Imperialism, Ranade shared the optimism of those who saw a ray of hope in the new situation. As it was his considered faith that the movements of human history have a meaning beyond what is apparent to us on a merely objective plane, he was expressing only a particular aspect of his universal faith when he observed, as he often did, that India's association with Britain was the result of a providential arrangement. The movements of the whole world were arranged providentially, that is to say according to a system of natural law, and the movements of Indian history could be no exception to this general rule.

Those who are unable to follow the thought of Ranade either on the subject of Nature and Providence, or on the subject of a common meaning in all human and natural history, are bewildered by his view that India's association with Britain was providential. Either they attribute this statement to Ranade's alleged membership of the school which thought that British Government in India was a divine boon or they attach to his statement no more than figurative or stylistic importance. As a matter of fact both these ways of disposing of Ranade's view about the providential nature of Britain's association with India are unsuited to the case. As a natural phenomenon which had prospects of being shaped to India's own betterment the association with Britain was taken by Ranade to be providential. Whether it had any meaning at all for the history of humanity at large, and if so what that meaning was, Ranade was willing to leave to the inscrutable ways of Providence. Such an outlook is rare in these days of what is called enlightenment and it may in any case be recorded here as a subjective reaction of Ranade to his environment. The subjectivity of wider outlook did not, however, prevent Ranade from assessing in a hard objective fashion all the implications of the Indian political situation.

The supreme evil that Ranade attributed to British conquest of and consolidation in India was the moral, intellectual and cultural paralysis that seemed to have overtaken the country. The prevailing sense of helplessness was no doubt due to a feeling of inferiority and frustration. The industrial superiority of England enabled it at once to capture the Indian markets which were exposed to foreign, including British, competition on account of the indifference and deliberate partisanship of the government. Domination of the markets and of industry coupled with the unchallenged political power of the new state stunned the whole of the Indian nation into self-oblivion. The memories of successful achievements of the past were blurred, and those who still could spare enough energy for thought seemed to think in imitative rather than creative channels. This cultural domination appeared to Ranade to be even more insidious and disastrous than the material hold established by the British people. He felt that it was of the

utmost national and world importance to rouse the Indian people to a sense of their own special greatness and merit and to remind them of their own national and human mission. Unless the passing events of Indian life were properly interpreted to the Indian people against the long term movements of human history they stood in imminent danger of being dazzled into self-forgetfulness and swamped by the tide of successful foreign influences.

The first task of the Indian politician, therefore, was to keep alive in the minds of his countrymen a lively and appreciative consciousness of the past achievements, present possibilities and future hopes of his own land. History is full of recorded and unrecorded proofs of Indian achievements in the fields of material industry and philosophical truth. In fact the greater the disappointment induced by contemporary subjection the stronger seemed to be the attachment to the memories of past greatness that the newly awakening mind of political India seemed to show. As regards the possibilities of the present and hopes about the future a more penetrating and stronger vision was necessary. Ranade's undoubtedly was such an intellect and throughout the prevailing gloom of despondency he discerned various rays of a hopeful renaissance of the creative spirit of the Indian people. He was most struck by the welding together into national as contrasted with communal or local consciousness of the social mind of the people. With occasional exceptions, the prevailing tone of Indian social and political thought was territorially and demographically parochial. The geographical unity of India was a physical fact and culturally¹ there were many things to bind together

1. We are in a sense as strictly national socially, as we are politically. Though the differences are great for purposes of immediate and practical reform, yet there is a background of common traditions, common religion, common laws and institutions and customs and perversions of such customs, which make it possible for us to deliberate together in spite of our differences. In dealing with these differences, it would not do to forget the common background any more than it would be wisdom to forget the differences. We have to eliminate the differences, and correct the perversions, which have sprung up and obscured the nobility of our common stock and ancient origin. It is a fortunate thing that most of the social evils complained of in these days were unknown in the days of our highest glory, and in seeking their reform, we are not imitating any foreign models, but restoring its ancient freedom and dignity in place of subsequent corruptions.—(M. 89-90).

at least the Hindu population of the whole land. Rarely, however, had the people in any part of the country felt the consciousness of being limbs of one and the same Indian nation.

The undeveloped political consciousness of the people, the prevailing influence of non-democratic forms of government and the constant stream of political invaders who disturbed political order before it was firmly set—all these factors militated against the rise of nationalism. The village was the unit of social life, all higher rungs of the administrative ladder were only occasionally felt by the rank and file of the people. Even administratively, the stage of political organisation was very elementary, inasmuch as even the kingdoms and principalities were very loosely organised. The consciousness of being organically connected to one another as the joint sharers of the fruits of the settled occupation of a common land—this, the material foundation of nationalism—was lacking. The Hindus had a purely non-political sense of religious union and some of the Mahomedan states ruled over extensive parts of India, without of course producing any appreciation of common citizenship among the subject people, for whom village organisation was still the most prominent administrative fact.

Under the British regime for the first time the whole of the geographical unit called India was brought under one sovereign power. Even the existence of Indian states made no difference in this all essential respect. The administrative and sovereign unification of the country was a fact of supreme national importance for India. That the sovereign was a foreign power and that the administration was that of a dependency—these facts do not detract anything from the simple legal position that all India and its peoples were knit together in a common political texture. The experience of this new life of common association created the first beginnings of Indian nationalism. The new life was one of alternate hope and disappointment, of gratefulness and grievance. Whether it was a feeling of satisfaction or of impatience, the crucial fact that it was shared by the inhabitants of the whole land without reference to their local domicile, the sharing of common advantages, hopes and grievances helped to build up a sense of national patriotism which was a novel thing in India's political history.

It is only too obvious today that the road to political freedom and safety lies through nationalism, though it does not end at it. Ranade was showing his genuine appreciation of this great gain for India's political progress in agreeing to make the best of a bad situation by cleverly turning it to national advantage. The numberless drawbacks of the British conquest could not obviate the fact that it made the idea and the reality of a common Indian nationality a matter of practical politics. Before the British conquest a very small number of statesmen may have dreamed of common Indian government; a few may have in their own way worked for it; but the generality of people were never in the habit of thinking nationally and even those who played their part on the political stage did not look beyond very narrow limits. With the British regime came modern scientific and literary education. Whatever may have been the predominant influence in Indian educational policy, the fact that education, especially English education, was spreading in the land was an event almost as epoch-making as the establishment of a common government itself.

As a result of British conquest the social order was put into a melting pot. The old division into castes and religious groups did not vanish, but as the public recognition of these distinctions was taken away the validity of old distinctions was every day being lessened. The dividing line between economic and social classes was crossed by new accumulations and a veritable jumble and reasortment of social status was in progress. This period of transition was very trying to all classes, especially as the state, which was the prime cause of the new alterations, did nothing to mitigate the evil results of transition. One good result, however, followed from the levelling up and levelling down that went on. An experience of equality, may be in common subjection, of all the citizens of the state was for the first time realised. Out of a sense of common subjection arose the first faint idea of appealing to common humanity² in each of the overriding political, social and even religious differences.

2. That inner spring, the hidden purpose not consciously realised in many cases, is the sense of human dignity and freedom, which is slowly asserting its supremacy over the national mind. It is not confined to one sphere of family life. It invades the whole man, and makes him feel that individual purity and social justice have paramount claims over us all, which we cannot ignore long without being dragged down to a lower level of existence.—(M. 179).

The association of all parts and peoples of India with Great Britain supplied the physical form for the new Indian nation. The life substance was supplied by the knowledge of the outside world conveyed by English education. The knowledge of English, though confined to a few, was yet a window through which the free air of political, cultural and industrial progress could flow into the land. By means of newspapers, books and personal contacts the knowledge that was first available to the English-knowing part of the population spread among the people. In Ranade's days the progress of this vivifying process was not pronounced. Hence all the more credit must be given to him for having recognised the fateful consequences of the new influences and for having deliberately tried to nurse them. In much of the detailed work that Ranade did or inspired the promotion of these two ends was implicit: the recognition of a common Indian nationality and the nursing of a desire for political, cultural and industrial progress such as was being realised in the contemporary world outside India.

This was perhaps an unpremeditated result of British rule, but it was none the less real. The philosophy of life and social organisation which held sway in England while the British government after the mutiny was consolidating its rule in India was the liberal philosophy. Individual freedom was the central plank of that philosophy, and equal political opportunity to influence social policy was its contribution to social structure. The thought of renaissance India thus came to bear the impress of all that was best and worst in contemporary English philosophy. A sense of individualism and social freedom went hand in hand with occasional indifference and irresponsibility. These things Ranade deplored and both in the political and economic spheres urged the need for an integrated national policy. The new-born urge towards emphasising and expressing individuality was, however, welcomed by Ranade as a much needed liberation of the creative spirit of individual self-expression. India had long ceased to think and act in terms of creative contribution to national and human progress. With all the faults of the new regime³ it

3. Those who know me know full well that I should be the last person to condemn the political aspirations that have been created in our minds as the result of British rule and liberal education. They represent a department of human activity, to the claims of which the people of this country have been long indifferent. No man can feel the full dignity of human existence who is dead to the duties of the citizenship of a great empire.—(M. 122-23).

appeared to Ranade that all was not lost if the commonness of humanity and the need for self-expression were realised as a result, may be an unintended result, of the new dispensation.

Ranade was under no misconception about the extent to which opportunities for self-expression were available under the new order. The prospect in this respect was indeed very disappointing. But in a way this was to be the source, not an accidental but a natural source, of the betterment and progress of the Indian people. The new social influence made for equality among Indians, and the new education emphasised freedom. The political structure was, however, based on racial inequality between the Indian and the European, and the economic condition of the people was growing from bad to worse leaving them no means of a better life. This contrast was a challenge both to the efforts of the Indian people and to the statesmanship of Great Britain. While favouring close contact with the forces of liberalism in England Ranade knew that all Britishers tend to be conservative so far as India is concerned. If, however, Indians knew how to utilise their new opportunities Ranade had no doubt that the British policy would undergo a suitable change. The new method of social reform was to be the raising of the consciousness of the masses,⁴ as opposed to the level of a few. Mass awakening based on correct appreciation of realities, both present and future, was to be the object of national reformist activity. It will be observed throughout Ranade's career that he allied himself with all causes that led to an improvement in the intellectual or moral status of the masses. He felt convinced that for such work the new order offered better opportunities than the old one, and that these opportunities were not being utilised as well as they deserved to be.

Since Ranade's days things have considerably improved in all these respects. The lesson of his life has been well appreciated by the leaders of later generations. In the

4. He often said to those who were about him that though under the present regime there was less field for personal ambition and less scope for the display of individual talent, there were greater possibilities for the mass of our people, and a great future lay before us, if only we roused ourselves to a true sense of our position, and did not let slip our opportunities.—(G. 772).

political and social spheres the mass awakening of the people has passed beyond the elementary stage, though the final consummation of an irresistible national urge is yet a considerable way off. In the economic sphere the mass movement is yet very slow. Only the problems of distribution have latterly begun to be canvassed in terms of the masses. The creative urge of disciplined and organised industry has not yet reached the leaders of the several schools of national opinion. Fortunately, there are some very outstanding exceptions, and it may be hoped that the strength, comprehensiveness and positive value of Ranade's scheme of national reform will again be combined in a plan of India's national reorganisation. The disabilities and opportunities of their new situation were a challenge to the Indian people, and Ranade showed the way in which the challenge could be successfully taken up.

The obvious contrast between British philosophy at home and its practice abroad was no less challenging to the powers of adaptation that proverbially go with British character. Ranade formulated many policies of political and administrative reform in India, and pleaded for them with great erudition and skill. He did not hope for quick results, he knew the comparative strengths of the Britishers and the Indians only too well to cherish such a fond hope. But he knew that the surest way to achieve lasting results as an outcome of the national political movement lay in sedulously removing those internal obstacles which we did not primarily owe to the British conquest. A pre-occupation with religious to the detriment of more material interests was the very first of such self-inflicted evils. Such a pre-occupation did not indicate a scale of values different from that of the Westerners but only an undeveloped national mind. Ranade, even by the standards of a religious age, was among the most religious minded of people. He, however, could find time to give earnest thought to the problems of social, economic and political welfare. It is a mark of advanced social consciousness that man considers it his proper concern to care for all aspects of human development. Without ceasing to care for religion it is both possible and necessary to think of economic and political progress. To raise these two latter to their proper place in the estimation of people was Ranade's

earnest endeavour. The underlying change in psychology was essentially a matter which the people could achieve for themselves. It is a sad thought that in spite of the earnest efforts of Ranade and of succeeding generations of political reformers a good deal remains to be achieved on this very basic plane of national reconstruction.

No people are thoroughly agreed about even the most important of the problems of their collective life. But it is only too obvious that unless a people in the last resort make up their mind to agree they cannot have a happy common life. After all that has been written about the subject of nationality this is the bare truth about the population factor in the structure of the state. The population limits of a political union are given by the number of people, who while expressing their respective views according to law ultimately are ready to acquiesce in the results of such processes as are allowed by law. Disagreement among the people carried to the limit of recalcitrancy is a form of incipient treason, and no state can withstand the widespread and prolonged existence of such an evil. One of the principal causes of the easy victories scored by the British and other Western armies over the forces of the Indian rulers is to be found in one form or another of political recalcitrancy among the indigenous powers. Internal dissensions are fostered and exploited by foreign rulers. This may be true ; but the existence of a strong, almost irresistible, tendency towards dissensions is an evil which cannot be attributed to foreigners. It is indigenous and deep-seated in the very blood of the people. Unless determined efforts are made to overcome this deleterious and dangerous tendency no stable organisation either for the winning or for the maintenance of freedom and progress is possible. This was the second internal or self-imposed obstacle to all-sided progress which Ranade desired to remove as a preliminary to any far-reaching schemes of political reform. By preaching the virtues of patriotism and by bringing people belonging to different groups on a platform of common interest Ranade tried to inculcate among his countrymen the capacity to unite for common ends. He did not fail in the attempt, but as is clear from later experience among several sections of the Indian

people, his success was not very remarkable. Still it is the outstanding fact of all our plans for national betterment that unless we learn to subordinate our differences to our concern for the common welfare we can neither be free nor prosperous.

Public spirit and readiness to co-operate will not be enough to produce the maximum possible benefit out of collective action. Discipline, that is readiness to play the allotted part according to the common scheme, is extremely essential. It has been well said that discipline is to human organisation what cement is to a material structure. Indian people have rarely shown such voluntary loyalty to collective organisations. Personal loyalties have been known to be boundless in several historical cases in India. Zeal for a common cause, most often religious, has also frequently brought forth the supreme virtues of self-surrender. But the sober and disciplined course of daily duty in a secular organisation has not generally commended itself to our people. Whether it is war or debate, commerce or government, people have shown themselves incapable for sustained submission to disciplined authority. This again is a trait the existence of which is quite independent of the existence of the British government, though the latter might benefit by the same. The extent of authority enjoyed by a people is in strict proportion to their capacity for self-discipline. Ranade both in his personal and public life was a great admirer of discipline according to law, moral or legal. Our indifference to public welfare, our dissensions and our lack of discipline were according to Ranade our real enemies. We had to conquer these before we set out to conquer our external conquerers. Fortunately the conquest over self-imposed obstacles was possible without outside sympathy or assistance. The inculcation of these three virtues, public spirit, national cohesion and political discipline, was for Ranade the very first step in a systematic reconstruction of the Indian polity.

By the very instinct of self-preservation, if not by following a deeper plan, the Government of India did often tend to set up one section of the community against another. Occasionally such a result is also produced by the practice of a purely empirical policy of meeting each situation as it arises. In either of these contingencies Ranade felt that the

Government were guilty of a very short-sighted action. The whole programme of government action covering all subjects of administration and affecting all classes of the people must be systematically thought out and reduced to generally approved principles. The British Government at home, which was the final master of the Government of India was mostly indifferent to happenings in India,⁵ except to such amongst them as directly affected important British interests or led to serious trouble. Time and again Ranade urged upon the powers that were supreme the inherent weakness and ulterior mischief of this policy. By comparison it appeared to Ranade that the Government of India were more susceptible to the pressure both of argument and of agitation. Whenever there were signs of such a welcome reaction on the part of Indian authorities Ranade favoured the policy of ranging Indian opinion behind the attitude taken up by the Government, and thus bringing pressure on Home authorities. Whether it was the issue of Indians in the colonies or of economic reform in India such situations occasionally arose, and in some cases the policy advocated by Ranade produced good results. The internal discipline of the British administrative organisation is, however, so perfect that public expression of a difference of opinion between the Indian and the British Governments has always been very rare. In respect of the central theme of Ranade's charge-sheet against the British regime, namely that they neglected Indian national interests in the vain pursuit of the essentially unjustifiable policy of confining state action only to policing duties, there was, unfortunately, not much to choose between the British and Indian Governments.

This attitude of negation on the part of the two governments, however, did neither surprise nor discourage Ranade. He was too good a student of history and of human nature not to see that, situated as they were, the British could have no incentive to change their policies so as to suit the interests of the subject people. Ranade did not belong to that category

5. The English rulers in India are brought face to face with the specialities of Indian life and realize their responsibilities. In England the authorities have not the advantage of this touch with actual life, and their English traditions naturally predispose them to regard that the State, as such, has no functions or responsibilities in this connection. — (E. 58).

of politicians who appeal to a successful foreign conqueror for the recognition of their independence. Such a situation is paradoxical in the last degree. The foreign government either rules, or it does not. If the latter, no appeal to them is needed; if the former no appeal is relevant. Ranade knew, as has been made clear in the preceding paragraphs, that many of the obstacles to our political advancement really emerge from our own drawbacks. These drawbacks have to be removed by our own action. When this is done, and to the extent to which this is done, our relations with the foreign government will easily, if not automatically, undergo a change. Ranade's advocacy of independence was, therefore addressed to the people themselves. He desired that the first tenet in the creed of Indian nationalism should be a solemn declaration that the Indian people were the chosen people to whom great tasks are allotted, and who are determined to see that these tasks are successfully carried out. As no nation could discharge such a divine trust, or a historical mission, without being first of all the masters of their own destiny and of the situation in which their task is to be performed, the people resolve to develop enough strength of purpose and of organisation to back their own claims to be the instrument of high national and international purpose.

It is not, in the first instance, every member of the public who can be inspired with such a faith and zeal. But as the experience of past and contemporary national movements unmistakably shows, if only the leaders of the movements maintain a united, strong and persistent appeal, in due course the people react in the desired direction. The process in the initial stages is very slow, but given the right type of leadership the reactions of the general body of citizens is rarely in doubt. In his own day Ranade succeeded in maintaining such a unity of central leadership. He was personally in touch with the leaders of all kinds of reformist movements in the several provinces. According to the needs of each case he managed to render the best possible assistance to all workers in the cause of national renaissance. That he was looked up to as the central sun which gave warmth and light to many a smaller star in the Indian firmament is amply pro-

ved by the universal and spontaneous flow of appreciation that gathered during and after his life.

Ranade, moreover, was prophetic in his vision. He had capacity to see deeper and to look further ahead than most people. He was not satisfied that the urge towards a common national goal of renaissance and progress was as strong and as unified as it should be, if it is to produce the desired result. He knew that the emotions of the Indian people were more powerfully stirred by a religious than by a political appeal. He knew also that the Indian people as a rule were prone to dissensions, apathy and indiscipline. While he hoped for the best in the way of a gradual development of a democratic public life in India, he longed for the emergence of a great national leader who would have it in him to transcend all smaller considerations and to appeal successfully to the sentiment and imagination of Indians of all classes. The rise of nationalities and their progress to freedom and power have invariably been associated with the life-work of a national hero. Ranade, in his days, came nearest to achieving this position. But on account of the exigencies of his official position and of the undeveloped state of the popular material itself he was not able to achieve more than quickening the national mind in all sections of the community and laying down the foundations of a national programme of reconstruction. It is no exaggeration to say that since the time of Ranade no Indian leader has attained the same degree of continued appeal to all sections of the community as he did. Nor has it been possible to integrate the different programmes of reconstruction into a national plan of action. Both the plan and the leader have yet to arrive, but this is certain that until they arrive no striking progress in our national movement is possible.

While he appreciated to the full the efficacy of the personal and emotional appeal Ranade knew that the beneficent effect of such influences tended to be temporary and fitful. In the long run a steady support to the movement can be based only on a conviction that it is in the interest of everybody to do so. For this reason Ranade was eager to frame a comprehensive plan of reform which the national movement should adopt. The plan was to embrace all aspects of life and was to extend to all

classes. Every individual must be given the fullest opportunity for self-development and perfection: this was to be the goal of organised political life. All institutions were to be judged by reference to their suitability or otherwise to promote this end. The adoption of this criterion at once solves many of the problems of class and communal conflicts. The equal claim of all citizens to the protection and assistance of the state is established. Freedom and equality of opportunity become the twin poles on which rests the appeal of the national movement.

In the actual plan of reform Ranade was not content merely with outlining a political organisation. It is true that he penned several memorials on detailed problems of the administration. This was all in the day's work as a politician, and in most cases they were intended to serve no better purpose than the political education of the people themselves.⁶ It is not on record that he planned any detailed political constitution for the country as a whole. He was keen on the status of India vis-a-vis the British empire, which he was not prepared to accept as a permanent fixture except on terms of perfect equality of status among the several parts of the union including Great Britain itself. Freedom and equality of opportunity, by which he laid great store, could not be realised except

6. A remark of his made to me in, I believe, 1891, has firmly fixed itself in my memory. In that year there was severe scarcity in the districts of Sholapur and Bijapur. The Sarvajanik Sabha, of which I was then Secretary, had collected a large amount of information about the condition of those districts, and a representation on the subject was in due course submitted to Government. It was a memorial, in the preparation of which we had spent considerable labour and thought. Government, however, sent us a reply of only two lines, just saying that they had noted the contents of our letter. I was greatly disappointed when we received this reply, and the next day, joining Mr. Ranade in his evening walk, I asked him: "What is the good of taking all this trouble and submitting these memorials, if Government don't care to say anything more than that they have noted the contents of our letter?" He replied: "You don't realize our place in the history of our country. These memorials are nominally addressed to Government, in reality they are addressed to the people, so that they may learn how to think in these matters. This work must be done for many years, without expecting any other result, because politics of this kind is altogether new in this land. Besides, if Government note the contents of what we say, even that is something."—(G. 779-80).

through an independent and democratic state. Given external freedom and internal democracy how the relations with other states should be organised as also how the structure of government was to be built up were matters of detail and convenience. When Ranade wrote so many things had to be done merely as initial spadework that it would have been in the last degree inappropriate to waste time in outlining the details of the constitution for a free India. It may, however, be inferred that Ranade was no blind worshipper of the English or any other single constitution. He knew that a constitution is good or bad according as it fulfils its purpose of realising the ends of collective policy.

Among these ends Ranade was very eager to include economic, social and cultural reform. The industry of the people was to be reorganised not only to be more productive, so as to raise people above want, but also to be more equalitarian, so as to bring within the reach of all the means of an honest and purposeful living. Full opportunities of free social co-operation were to be offered to all, and the widest possible opportunity to benefit by the cultural possessions of the nation such as its literature, art and tradition was to be given to the people irrespective of their economic and social status. These positive ends of statehood were more important than the political and administrative machine set up for realising them. Once the people at large have made up their mind to have a common political life for the attainment of the accepted national ends the leaders may be left to modify and utilize the existing institutions to serve the new purpose. General support and acceptance were as necessary as talent and leadership. To secure these in adequate measure is never a simple problem, but given the basic loyalty and concurrence of the people the task of outlining a constitution, though still stupendous, is not by any means impossible. Ranade concentrated on the fundamentals of a successful constitution, the corporate loyalty of the people and their enthusiastic acceptance of the general principles of state action.

The community of sentiment and of interest which is essential to the successful functioning of a national state is impeded in India by several influences. The very

size of the country and its division into several sub-units having their own regional and traditional characteristics tend to act as obstacles in the way of a common national feeling. To add to these historical and geographical factors we have the deep-seated racial, communal and linguistic differences among the people. Both the major communities have their own subdivisions and not all of these can be said to be too minor to stand in the way of the national movement. The other communities such as the Parsis, Christians, Sikhs and Anglo-Indians have a consciousness of separate identity which must be reckoned with in outlining our programme of national development. But the single overriding problem in the way of nationality is the so-called Hindu-Muslim problem. As on most other important aspects of Indian life so on this one Ranade had spent his thought and had looked at the thing in all its aspects. He was not content merely with stating a proposition such as the unity of India and then assuming that it should of itself appeal to all sections of the people without a practical proof being deliberately and convincingly conveyed to the doubters.

This problem of Hindu Muslim relations is still with us. Next to the unsympathetic and unstatesmanlike attitude of the British Government, it tends to thwart all the beneficent movements in the country. Unfortunately the undoubted intricacies of the problem are further complicated by a tendency to think in personal terms and by purely irrational prejudices. Ranade's approach to the subject was unique and fresh, both in its objectivity and comprehension. Ranade had no complex on the subject, which is more than can be said for many a leader in either community who has handled the problem. Ranade did not consider that the period of Mahomedan rule over certain parts of India was one of shame⁷ either for the

7. It cannot be easily assumed that in God's Providence, such vast multitudes as those who inhabit India were placed centuries together under influences and restraints of alien domination, unless such influences and restraints were calculated to do lasting service in the building up of the strength and character of the people in directions in which the Indian races were most deficient. Of one thing we are certain, that after lasting over five hundred years, the Mahomedan Empire gave way, and made room for the

Hindus generally or for the inhabitants of the areas specially concerned. Conscious of the achievements of the Hindu community in several other spheres Ranade did not share either the inferiority complex of the Hindu or the superiority complex of the Mahomedan. The Mahomedan invasions of India and the progress of Mahomedan conversions in the country both belong to an age before the rise of the feeling of Hindu, let alone Indian, nationality. The Mahomedan invasions, like the Aryan colonisation before it and the British conquest after it, belong to the pre-national era of Indian history.

Now that we have become conscious of a common Indian sentiment and now that we realise the great advantage to us all of having a united and independent national state in India it behoves us to bring about a fusion of the best elements in both the communities. It is too often forgotten that the two communities had been imperceptibly yet effectively influenced by their mutual contact, and a common cultural pattern was already being formed when the British as political conquerors and commercial competitors made their appearance on the scene.⁸ The process of internal fusion was overshadowed

re-establishment of the old native races in the Punjab, and throughout Central Hindusthan and Southern India, 'on foundations of a much more solid character than those which yielded so easily before the assaults of the early Mahomedan conquerors. The domination therefore had not the effect of so depressing the people that they were unable to raise their heads again in greater solidarity. If the Indian races had not benefitted by the contact and example of men with stronger muscles and greater powers, they would have never been able to reassert themselves in the way in which history bears testimony they did.—(M. 219-20).

8. More lasting benefits have however accrued by this contact in the higher tone it has given to the religion and thoughts of the people. In this respect, both the Mahomedans and Hindus benefitted by contact with one another. As regards the Mahomedans, their own historians admit that the Sufi heresy gathered strength from contact with the Hindu teachers, and made many Mahomedans believe in transmigration and in the final union of the soul with the supreme spirit. The Mohorrum festival and saint worship are the best evidence of the way in which the Mahomedans were influenced by Hindu ideas. We are more directly concerned with the way in which this contact has affected the Hindus. The prevailing tone of pantheism had established a toleration for polytheism among our most revered ancient teachers who rested content with separating the few from the many, and

by the strong influx of English ideas and practices. In so far as our present social, economic and political life is under the influence of western models the two indigenous patterns have been equally influenced. The fusion that was started before the advent of the British has now taken the form of common conformity to a third and stronger influence. As has been noted in an earlier paragraph the emergence of the sentiment of a common Indian nationality refers to this period in which both the Hindu and the Mahomedan have commonly reacted to the external influences.

Pursuit of science, its application to industry, the building up of efficient economic systems, the organisation of free yet strong political administrations, the insistence on civic in addition to moral virtues and similar special traits of the British people were lacking in both the Hindu and Mahomedan communities.⁹ To appreciate the usefulness of these qualities and to develop these in their own conduct so that the modern type of

established no bridge between them. This separation of the old religion has prevented its higher precepts from becoming the common possession of whole races. Under the purely Hindu system, the intellect may admit, but the heart declines to allow a common platform to all people in the sight of God. The Vaishnava movement however has succeeded in establishing the bridge noted above, and there can be no doubt that in the hands of the followers of Ramananda, especially the Kabirpanthis, Mulikdasis, Dadupanthis, the followers of Mirabai, of Lord Gauranga on the Bengal side, and Baba Nanak in the Punjab in the fifteenth and the sixteenth centuries, the followers of Tukaram, Ekanath and Namdev in the Deccan, Babalalis, Pranatanthis, Sadhs, the Satnamis, the Shiva Narayanas and the followers of Mahant Rama Charan of the last two centuries—this elevation and the purification of the Hindu mind was accomplished to an extent which very few at the present moment realise in all its significance.— (M. 224-25)

9. Both Hindus and Mahomedans lack many of those virtues represented by the love of order and regulated authority. Both are wanting in the love of municipal freedom, in the exercise of virtues necessary for civic life, and in aptitudes for mechanical skill, in the love of science and research, in the love and daring of adventurous discovery, the resolution to master difficulties, and in chivalrous respect for womankind. Neither the old Hindu nor the old Mahomedan civilisation was in a condition to train these virtues in a way to bring up the races of India on a level with those of Western Europe, and so the work of education had to be renewed, and it has been now going on for the past century and more under the *par Britannica* with results—which all of us are witnesses to in ourselves.—(M. 226).

government and economy may be possible for themselves—these form the common task and concern of both the communities. In the past the two communities benefitted by their mutual contact. The intolerance of the Muslim had always worked against a stable political and social order. The more peaceful and tolerant Hindu society rendered a settled political life possible for the Muslim. Having been given the chance to rule over wide areas the Mahomedan rulers benefitting by the example of their Hindu predecessors improved the political systems in many respects. The territorial and departmental subdivision of Governmental authority was much more systematically carried out under the Mahomedan than under the Hindu rulers.

The influence of Muslim rulers was also witnessed in the greater development of the arts, sciences and industry of the country.¹⁰ In respect of steady and skilful agriculture as also of such industries as metallurgical and textile, the advantage lay on the side of the Hindus. By a process of

10. Besides this source of strength, there can be no doubt that in a hundred other ways the Mahomedan domination helped to refine the tastes and manners of the Hindus. The art of government was better understood by the Mahomedans than by the old Hindu sovereigns. The art of war also was singularly defective till the Mahomedans came. They brought in the use of gunpowder and artillery. In the words of Babar, "they taught ingenuity and mechanical invention in a number of handicraft arts," the very nomenclature of which, being made up of non-Hindu words, shows their foreign origin. They introduced candles, paper, glass, and household furniture and saddlery. They improved the knowledge of the people in music, instrumental and vocal, medicine and astronomy, and their example was followed by the Hindus in the perversions of both these sciences, astrology, and alchemy. Geography and history were first made possible departments of knowledge and literature by their example. They made roads, aqueducts, canals, caravansaries, and the post office, and introduced the best specimens of architecture, and improved our gardening, and made us acquainted with a taste of new fruits and flowers. The revenue system as inaugurated by Todarmal in Akbar's time is the basis of the revenue system up to the present day. They carried on the entire commerce by sea with distant regions, and made India feel that it was a portion of the inhabited world with relations with all, and not cut off from all social intercourse. In all these respects, the civilisation of the united Hindu and Moslem powers represented by the Moguls at Delhi was a distinct advance beyond what was possible before the tenth century of the Christian era.—(M. 223-24).

conversion large classes of artisans later on walked into the Mahomedan fold. But even independently of the conversion of the local population the Muslim immigrants into India brought with them several new arts and sciences. By their example a more purposeful and richer content was imparted to the life of a citizen. Even the government was in several cases better organised as for instance in the matter of a regular postal service and the systematic imposition of land revenue. Ranade was fully appreciative of the independent virtues of both the communities; and he could still spare an appreciative thought for the beneficent effects of the process of fusion resulting from the best contributions of the two. He believed that this fusion was no accident: indeed this was the historic mission of the Indian nation.¹¹ Combining the best elements of the Mahomedan, Buddhistic and Western civilisations with the prior Hindu basis of Aryan culture was to be the role of renaissance India. In successfully carrying it out the country would not only be rendering its own freedom and progress easy of accomplishment, but it would set an example to the rest of the world, which would in due course be similarly reorganised.

Asoka among the Hindu kings and Akbar among the Mahomedan had similar ideas. Both had realised, after prolonged experience, that it is futile to hope that all the inhabitants of this land can be converted to a single faith. On the other hand both had realised that while a common Indian government would be a strong and stabilising force in Asia a divided India would be a danger to itself and to the rest of the world. The study of this early history had convinced Ranade that no progress either along political or industrial lines beyond a very near limit was possible without joint action among the several communities in India. To prove the truth

11. The saints came out well in their struggles with their foreign rulers, and they prevailed not by fighting nor by resistance, but by quiet resignation to the will of God. There was a tendency perceptible towards a reconciliation of the two races in mutual recognition of the essential unity of Alla with Rama, and by the time Shivaji appeared on the scene, this reconciliation seems to have been almost complete, though occasional outbursts of Mahomedan fanaticism were not altogether unknown even then.— (R. 171).

of this belief to the members of both the communities and to accustom them to act together where common interest needed such action was Ranade's prescription for the communal problem. This was indeed a repetition of the practical side of the new religious movement of Akbar.¹² Ranade was willing to leave the metaphysical and ritualistic sides of each religion to be organised according to traditional methods. He only urged that the modern world of expanding opportunities threw up so many common concerns before the votaries of each religion that to find a common course of action for these common problems became as necessary for a successful communal life as the undisturbed practice of traditional religion.

There were so many immediate and ulterior interests of great importance which the two, in fact, all the communities shared among themselves. The task of liberation from the foreign political and cultural domination, as also from the internal sway of ignorance and narrow-mindedness, was equally urgent for all.¹³ The difficulties of accomplishing this task were so great that a united, persistent and systematic effort could alone have a fair chance of success. If in their short-sightedness the leaders of the several communities do not recognise either the overriding importance of attaining liberation or the inescapable need for unity to achieve the end it can be set down only to their incomplete or perverse apprehension of realities. Apart from the political and cultural issues involved in the

12. There is at times a great danger of the work of Akbar being undone by losing sight of this great lesson which the history of his reign and that of his two successors is so well calculated to teach. The Conference which brings us together is especially intended for the propagation of this 'din' or 'Dharma'—(M. 227).

13. Both Hindus and Mahomedans have their work cut out in this struggle. In the backwardness of female education, in the disposition to overleap the bounds of their own religion, in matters of temperance, in their internal dissensions between castes and creeds, in the indulgence of impure speech, thought, and action on occasions when they are disposed to enjoy themselves, in the abuses of many customs in regard to unequal and polygamous marriages, in the desire to be extravagant in their expenditure on such occasions, in the neglect of regulated charity, in the decay of public spirit, in insisting on the proper management of endowments—in these and other matters both communities are equal sinners, and there is thus much ground for improvement on common lines.—(M. 228).

national movement there was the basic and immediately pressing problem of poverty. Unless all the resources of the Indian continent are organised in a well-constructed plan of national exploitation not even a moderate rise in the standard of life of the people is possible. The historical evolution is all in the direction of fusion; the present task is one of common endeavour and the hopes of a future prosperity can only be shared in common. These undoubted truths of the situation, in the opinion of Ranade, should weigh heavily in the balance against the memories of conflict, the expressions of prejudice and the fears of domination. By precept and example persons of light and leading in all communities should inculcate these truths on the minds of the common people. Nothing can compensate for remissness in this all important requirement for a successful end to the Indian national movement.

The work of encouraging fusion of thought and the spread of toleration cannot be accomplished in a short time, nor can the labours of any single individual or group suffice for the purpose. It must be a common tenet of Indian nationalism that progress for India means progress for all its parts and communities. It must be clearly impressed on the minds of all thinking persons that such a progress in freedom and prosperity is not feasible for anybody except through the united action of all. Hence the thought of progress must be coupled with that of unity. If this is achieved on a systematic plan starting from the earliest stages of instruction and organisation the national movement will in due course gather enough internal strength to make the transfer of power inevitable. Unforeseen cataclysms apart, it is difficult to see any other way than this one indicated by Ranade, which is open to the leaders of any Indian community which wants to reach its declared goal of freedom and prosperity.

Like the prophet that he was, Ranade wrote not only for his own but for several succeeding generations. In many respects the actual course of Indian politics has strayed beyond the limits outlined by Ranade. In almost all these cases the resulting situation of inter-communal relations has been most discouraging. With all the experience of later years it is only too obvious now that while sectional action may promote

sectional interests or prevent sectional injuries common national ideals cannot be attained except by the practice of united action. An ounce of patriotic service rendered in this field of building up the sentiment and practice of a common Indian nationality is worth more than a ton of achievement in more superficial fields of public service. Through the activities of the Social and Industrial Conferences as also of the National Congress itself Ranade did his own bit to create such a feeling of common interest. It is a pity that at subsequent stages of Indian political evolution, especially at those where the crumbs of seats and office were being distributed at the grudging yet designing hands of a foreign power, an equally alert and lofty leadership was not available.

CHAPTER IX

ADMINISTRATIVE REFORM

“ We must push the volume and momentum of the central absolutism, without endangering our defence against foreign attack. This should be the leading motto of native political aspirations. Centralised India is a giant like a steam-roller, which crushes good and bad things under the same process and the germs of progress are nipped in the bud by the deadweight of inert force.” —Ranade

It will be clear from the contents of the previous chapters that Ranade's interest in public affairs emanated from an altogether lofty vision both of the future of India and of his own part in the process of realising the same. He looked upon the happenings in India as a part of the wider human struggle for progress towards a unified and civilised existence. The particular incidents of world history at any given moment were also interpreted as a stage in the process of evolution. Though Ranade was thus inclined towards a wide and long-range view of politics and history he was by no means a determinist. He was not prepared to surrender to mere objective forces, or to destiny, the prospect of betterment for each individual and community. He held that individuals as well as groups could by a disciplined will realise, within measurable limits, the ideals of their own creation. This indeed was the special faculty vouchsafed to humanity, and in not recognising its existence or not utilising it to the full we were acting unworthily of our heritage, and by a surrender to destiny were becoming guilty of the worst form of atheism. Not to recognise a supreme purpose and not to exert ourselves to the full to attain it implied a moral mistrust of ourselves and of the cosmic process which amounted, for Ranade, to a flagrant denial of the principles both of good and of progress.

Ranade did not even once err in this vital respect. For himself and for the groups in which his lot was for the moment cast he tried to realise the best possible ideal of progress. While content with a modicum of immediate progress,

if no better advance could possibly be realised, he was very keen that the direction towards which the progress was taking place should not be deflected from the right course. He himself studied at first hand and exhaustively all the outstanding problems of public policy in his own day. Such topics as he himself could not find the time to study he delegated to one of the several ardent workers that he had gathered round himself. On several occasions he or one of his immediate helpers prepared informative notes for others who ostensibly used them in the Councils or on a wider platform. In turn he himself was occasionally aided in this way by his associates in other parts of the country. He thus succeeded in creating and keeping up an atmosphere of continuous and methodical study of public problems with a view to define the best line of their final solution and the steps along that path that were immediately feasible. Though the officers of Government were sometimes nettled by the persistent and well-informed criticisms of Ranade they had learned by experience to trust in his reliability and moderation.

Ranade never did anything to forfeit this confidence either of his colleagues or opponents. Under his guidance detailed memorials were submitted to Government on important problems of the day. During the disastrous famine of 1876 the Poona Sarvajanic Sabha, under the guidance of Ranade, organised a net-work of field investigators. The reports collected by these agents of the Sabha were often very helpful to the Government itself, and strengthened the case for particular reforms that the Sabha advocated for the time being. Ranade himself never spoke without a full study of the facts of the situation and without the most exhaustive and sympathetic study of the viewpoints of those who differed from him. It was in this spirit that he carried on the work of agitating for detailed administrative reform. Whether it was the famine system or agrarian legislation, the method followed was the same. The problem was studied in all its aspects; experience from other countries was utilized if necessary and an exhaustive survey and constructive proposals were offered.

In so far as the problems of the day arose out of hardships or disappointments suffered by the people they consti-

tuted their grievances. {Ranade knew full well that the only point at which the public at large are really interested in politics is their own experience of the administration. So long as this point of contact is satisfactory the ordinary citizen has no real interest in politics. In a changing society, however, the process of constant adjustment between new needs and old forms has to be consciously guided. It is here that delayed or misguided action on the part of responsible authorities creates a feeling of dissatisfaction which in course of time develops into a public grievance. Under the best of administrations there are bound to be some grievances. To be conscious of these and to work for their redress is a sign of political sensibility and social strength, and not of unhealthy irritation of the public mind. For its own part the state loses nothing either of its prestige or authority by readily responding to the just and practicable demands of the aggrieved people. The whole of this process was a natural channel through which a necessary function of adjustment was to be discharged.

The attitude of the Government of India was of course not always so correct or sympathetic towards those who took upon themselves the inconvenient and thankless task of formulating and putting forward the grievances of the people. It has to be admitted that on their side not all the public workers with whom Government had to deal came up to the standard of accuracy and fairness laid down by Ranade for himself and for his followers. To the natural impatience of criticism from which all authorities, and especially autocratic authorities, suffer the Government of India added the inevitable prejudice and suspiciousness of a foreign power. Ranade was careful to take this fact into account while stating his case. The consideration that he showed for the special position of the Government of India as arbiters of the destinies of a mass of natives subject to their authority and the profuseness with which he quoted foreign examples for their guidance were both the consequence of a just recognition of the difficulties of Government. Even this extraordinary fairness on his part did not always save Ranade from unmerited reproaches and rebuffs from Government. As, however, he had prepared himself for this and even worse before he took on himself the

function of a public leader he was not deterred in his efforts. He always declared that the memorials and representations were only nominally addressed to Government. Their real appeal was to the people. By knowing the position and prospects in all their bearings the people came to take an informed and vital interest in public affairs. This was a task of political education on the success of which depended not only the redress of particular grievances concerned, but what was far more important, the realisation of a better administrative system in future.

“The people got the government that they deserved.” Ranade was thoroughly conscious of the element of truth in this saying. As he believed that for the full expression of human personality a free and democratic constitution was essential he was eager so to train the public mind as to be suitable for such an advanced form of government. Ranade's advocacy of constitutional and democratic progress was not based on any sentimental or abstract appeal. The only politics that is real is the one that arises out of the urgent wants of the people as they realise them, and only such a form of social organisation is likely to work smoothly and advantageously as is adjusted to the political capacities of the people. Ranade, unlike many other Indian leaders, felt that for the realisation of India's political progress a two fold policy was needed. While urging upon the British people the need and the advantage of liberalising the Indian constitution we have to educate and organise our own people for suitable action. Internal reform and organisation by their very success render an external power functionless. Constructive work among our own people was in a real political sense a feature, and a necessary feature, of the struggle for liberation.

Some of the references in the earlier parts of this book have made mention of the fact that Ranade felt that liberation was not merely a stage of the withdrawal of external restraints. It consisted in a removal of all the barriers, internal and external, on the fullest development and self-expression of the individual. That was the best constitution which provided to each citizen adequate incentive and opportunity for self-realisation. Ranade was keen on viewing the society

as a whole, and he was no friend of the negative and mechanical individualism of the nineteenth century. He was, in other words, prepared with Jesus to give unto Caesar what belonged to Caesar. The necessity to maintain the general conditions of order and welfare entail a certain exercise of co-ordinating and directive authority to which all individual citizens have to submit in their own interests. By being allowed to determine these general conditions the individual citizens experience the moral satisfaction of self-government. In so far as the general level of political education and capacity render such a course free from all serious risk Ranade would welcome an expansion of the power to share in Governmental authority. He was, however, more keen on having the conditions and means of effective self-development than on the formal possession of a vote. This last carried with it a responsibility and an opportunity which had to be brought home to the citizen. This task of political awakening and education has to go on continuously in fact from generation to generation. In the meanwhile those on whom the powers of administration devolve by virtue of political evolution have to use them for the all-sided betterment and education of the people.

As Ranade did not share a one-sided and negative view of the functions of the state he wanted the Government of India and all the subordinate public authorities to undertake schemes of constructive public welfare. Politics was not to confine itself to maintenance of peace but was to touch all points of the individual citizen's life where it could go on without undermining the sense of freedom and responsibility. Politics was to be the management of the affairs of the polity, the collective unit, into whose life all the smaller strands of interests were properly unified. The old Indian notions regarding the responsibility of the state were in keeping with such a comprehensive and positive view of politics. This was also the view that arose from Greek and modern continental experience. Ranade desired to make a definite attempt to wean the Indian Government from the negative traditions of British thinkers and to set before all administrative authorities in India the ideal and the duty of contributing their best to collective welfare. *

The large sphere of social legislation thus appeared to Ranade as a necessary extension of the beneficent influence of the state. The Government of India was ready to adopt some measures such as labour legislation, either because they were familiar with these in England or because the interests of British producers seemed to be well served by such restrictions placed on their Indian competitors. For such spheres as tenancy and debt legislation the same Government had no enthusiasm. But even these are illustrations of the restrictive aspect of legislation. Law as an instrument of positive social improvement was Ranade's ideal, while for the contemporary generation of British administrators such a policy was in the last degree heterodox. Elementary and professional education, agricultural reform, industrial progress—these matters require a strong central lead which in the absence of legislation can hardly be supplied. Ranade was eager not only to invoke the restrictive but also the constructive power of law to plan, to execute and to accelerate the movement for national regeneration.

Despairing of early action on the part of Government along lines that he had in view, and realising that even under the most beneficent and liberal of governments, ultimately the advantage of each individual would be strictly in proportion to his deserts Ranade tended to concentrate on the task of social and economic reform. Not that in his heart of hearts he underrated the importance of these. But he was thoroughly conscious of the truth that it is one thing to work with the organised force of the community behind your movement for reform, and quite another to conduct an uphill task against the combined apathy of the people and the state. Every administration in India had according to Ranade so to equip itself as to promote by all legal means what it considered to be the best line of progress. A very large part of our industrialisation and intellectual education would long ago have been accomplished if such a view of their administrative responsibilities had been taken by the several governments among whom the task of governing India was divided.

Much has been made of the realisation of liberty in the modern state, and the notion is even now current that if only

the constitution conferred a certain number of fundamental rights on the individuals these would constitute a charter of their liberties. Ranade was not opposed to the idea that there should be a constitution and that it should contain a chapter on fundamental rights.¹ But he affirmed the inadequacy of liberty which is a mere possession externally conferred, and not an internal development. With his ideas of social unity and just distribution it is difficult to say how far Ranade would have gone on the road to equal sharing. It is clear that he would have countenanced no move by which, beyond the minimum of a humane subsistence, material advantages would have been conferred in a manner subversive of the dignity and responsibility of each individual. Though a material addition to earnings beyond the limit of a national minimum would tend to reduce the sense of responsibility the provision for all of equal opportunities of self-improvement would be free from serious objection. In fact to ensure the beneficent effect of freedom provision of the opportunities to use it to advantage would be a necessary supplement. As Ranade's conception of liberty was compatible with the existence of a well-endowed and active social authority, it was also accompanied by an insistence on the provision of the means for the wise use of that freedom. He hoped that such an organised and planned freedom would prevent liberty from either withering into futility or deteriorating into license. In India the governing institutions were to aim at hitting the mean between the negative and positive concepts of liberty, and between the restrictive and beneficent functions of the state.

1. From some of the stray utterances and writings of Ranade as from the contents of some statements in the drafting of which Ranade was known to have a hand, it may be divined that in his scheme of constitutional structure the following points would find a prominent place. (1) Supremacy of the Law; (2) Representative Legislature with representation to princes in the upper chamber; (3) Common constitution for states; (4) Parliamentary Government; (5) Representation of India in the Imperial Parliament pending the full development of the Indian constitution; (6) Decentralisation and popularisation of the judiciary. All these items of constitutional reorganisation were in keeping with his general principles. But as he had no occasion to frame a full-fledged Indian constitution, which had any prospect of practical realisation, we can only speak with confidence of such of his ideas as had a permanent bearing on the Indian situation.

As Ranade favoured such a purposeful and constructive interpretation of the role of the state he was more than ordinarily careful in outlining the principles of administrative structure suitable for India. Considering the size of the country and its division into parts which are neither geographically nor culturally homogeneous, Ranade perceived the inherent difficulty of administering the whole land as a centralised system.² The geographical, economic and military requirements of a stable and progressive government would indicate the need of a strong central government for the country. Almost an equally vital counterpart of such an arrangement would be the administrative decentralisation of functions. That national functions should be nationally organised and that local functions should be delegated to local authorities was the general principle of administrative allocation favoured by Ranade. This meant the adoption of the principle of federation in the internal administration of the country. While conceding to the local authorities functions that were essentially local in their significance, Ranade would still retain sufficient co-ordinating authority with the centre to enable it to secure conformity to minimum standards of efficiency and progress, and to prevent likely sabotage of the policies of the central government in their own sphere of action.

Ranade's ideas of a suitable government for India were taken more from an observation of Indian history than from the study of successful foreign constitutions. This is not to

2. It is this evil of centralized government which enervates and demoralizes all the local springs of action. It will no doubt be said that these local representatives are more likely to abuse their power than even the worst officials. We think honorary magistrates associated together and sitting as a bench once a month or more may safely be trusted never to go wrong, and they will certainly relieve the hands of overburdened officials. Their functions may also be duly subordinated to the superior authority of the higher civil and criminal courts. It is in this direction chiefly that we think our efforts must be directed in the future development of the great reform which is being introduced at the present day all over the country. The people generally, and certainly those residing in the larger towns, may well be expected to accept gladly even increased burdens, if the lower magisterial powers, and the control of the police, were freely bestowed on their natural leaders.—(E. 213-14).

suggest that he had not studied the organisation and working of foreign constitutions. In fact he was extremely well-read on the subject, having mastered the details of past as well as of contemporary governments. This is quite clear from the list of books that he has been known to have studied even in his young days. Perhaps on account of this very wide study of the subject he had come to the conclusion that the system of government that was natural and beneficent for a people should arise out of their own needs and aptitudes. While the need for stability and progress pointed unmistakably towards an all-India organisation with a strong national government the inherited aptitudes of the people were definitely connected with local units of administration. All governments before the British had left the village institutions untouched. Round the village was organised all the inherited sense of public spirit and patriotism of the people. Even their notions of liberty and social justice were organised on the same basis.

The village bodies, of which the Panchayats in the south of the country were the most developed and complete models, enshrined the twin principles of justice and authority. While justice was interpreted as a rule to mean the upholding of custom, which in itself was based on the reconciliation of conflicting claims, authority was frequently used to change custom so as to suit new requirements. This was a free, natural and effective mode of self-expression and self-preservation, which all people understood and which all shared. The British government almost deliberately undid the work of ages. The village republics which had evoked the admiration of even British observers were rendered lifeless the moment the British administration began to insist on direct relations in all respects with individual citizens. The English administrators in their jealousy and inexperience felt that to retain the organised agency of village bodies would impair the sovereignty of the new regime. Had they studied the tone and spirit of Indian institutions a little longer and a little more patiently they would have been impressed by the beneficent use that could be made of these institutions.

But this was not to be and now we are faced, as Ranade discovered, with the problem of reconstructing the adminis-

trative superstructure with the natural foundations cut off at the outset. Ranade, however, did not despair. While agreeing to the initiation, at the higher rungs of the administrative machine, of deliberative and governing bodies suitable to modern ideas and needs, he suggested an entire reorganisation of local government on the basis of village self-government. For sheer administrative and financial convenience the British administrators were also feeling the need of reconstructing local government in India. Some among them, like the late Lord Ripon, were fully alive to the political implications of the new step, which they knew would in due course lead to a demand for the democratisation of the whole administration. Ranade readily took advantage of this orientation in official policy and pressed for a widespread scheme of local self-government with village bodies as the foundation, and municipalities and local boards as the next higher rungs of organisation. While these two last bodies came into being as a result of legislation and official action on the subject, no determined effort was made to lay the foundations of local government in places where they were most naturally needed. Among the reasons that account for the unsatisfactory progress of local government in India a very prominent place must be given to the exclusion of villages from the original scheme of the establishment of local bodies.

The working of self-governing institutions depends so much on traditional attitudes and conventional practices that it is far from certain that even if the village institutions had been systematically reintroduced, they would have continued to function successfully after a lapse of over two generations. But the old memories would have served at least as a favourable background for the organisation and smooth working of those bodies. Success of these and higher bodies for local government would also depend in a very great measure on the functions that would be allotted to them. Ranade was alive to a superficial dilemma that besets all attempts at increasing the scope of action of self-governing institutions. Unless important functions of government are conferred upon these bodies, sufficient interest is not taken in their working by people of talent and responsibility. On the other hand unless a

minimum of efficiency is secured in the functioning of these bodies by the association of responsible people important functions cannot be delegated to them.

This dilemma is fortunately as old as the history of self-government. The only way to deal with it is to proceed by the path of gradual devolution and effective safeguards both of which are democratically administered. The municipal and local boards now operating in India have no other more important functions than conservancy, maintenance of roads and primary education. These are important activities in their own way.³ The experience gained in administering them goes a long way in training both the electors and their representatives on these bodies. But these functions are by no means the characteristic functions of government. They are taken over by the public bodies because it is found to be the best way to administer and finance them. The really distinguishing functions of government are the police and magisterial functions. Unless in the scheme of decentralisation of authority these functions are delegated to local bodies no real local government or decentralisation can be said to exist. The particular manner in which local bodies are to be associated with the administration of these functions may be so settled that it would satisfactorily meet the requirements of each case.

There was in the earlier days of the British Indian administration a system by which local bodies were called upon to contribute a share of their income for the maintenance of the police force. Though such a contribution by itself gave the local body no share in the authority of the department it served as a reminder to both the local body and the police of the essentially civic nature of the functions administered by the

3. The conservancy of public health, the charge of education and medical charity, and even the making and repair of roads and buildings are not in any real sense of the word the distinctive duties of government. They essentially belong to the sphere of private effort and are only undertaken by civilized Governments, because their organization affords a ready-made agency for corporate usefulness. It is the magisterial and police functions which represent the distinctive feature of sovereign authority, and these must be localized if local government is not to be a misnomer and a certain failure—(E. 214).

magistracy and police. Further development of the position should have taken place in the direction of increasing the contact of local bodies with the organisation of law and order.⁴ As a matter of fact even the then existing link was broken and the local bodies were reduced to a position of conservancy associations. This retrograde step was deplored by Ranade who urged that police and magisterial organisation should in some way be brought into contact with the local bodies, who should be made to feel that theirs was the primary responsibility to see that peace is properly maintained and that adequate means are found out for the purpose.

Recent experience of the working of local bodies has not been uniformly encouraging and in several places, inefficiency and corruption have been proved to exist. Even in Ranade's days these things were not unknown. Ranade was not, however, deterred by these happenings from suggesting what appeared to him to be the right path of progress. The probable dangers in the way only served as an occasion for providing administrative safeguards and reserves of central power. The general scheme of administration was to be centrally settled and the provincial governments were to possess sufficient authority to secure conformity to the minimum standards of efficiency and integrity. But the execution of functions would be organised by localities in which the local body concerned would be regularly associated with the general policy of the department. Without the power of interference such a system would give to the local bodies a real sense of influence which by adding to their responsibility would help to improve the tone of their administration. It cannot be denied that some risk of lowering the standard of administration is involved in

4. There can be no doubt that local government, limited to conservancy and charitable functions, is more or less a misnomer and doomed to inevitable failure. For, it will never secure the same enthusiastic support of the population which would have been enlisted, if local bodies had been organized on the English plan of appointing representatives of the local gentry as conservators of peace and guardians of the law, and associating with them representative ratepayers in every local board. It will be found that in no single self-governed country of Europe or America has this power and responsibility of magisterial and police functions been denied to the local governing bodies.—(E. 211).

such a step. But the ultimate importance of decentralising some of the vital functions of government is so great and under suitable safeguards the real danger to efficiency is so small that a beginning in this matter has to be made.

In Ranade's scheme of administrative reconstruction all the three principles—national co-ordination, local execution and collective action,—played an equally important part. He was, therefore, desirous of extending the function of local bodies even to wider limits than the usually mentioned functions of government. Banking, industrial progress, land revenue are only some of the optional functions which Ranade desired to delegate to local bodies. In a vast country like ours it was not to be expected that local bodies in all areas could be run on a uniform scheme of functions. A certain minimum of common functions having been prescribed by law in selected areas, and under suitable administrative safeguards, wider functions could be permitted to local bodies possessing an adequate degree of efficiency. Neither a too trustful nor a too bureaucratic attitude is permissible in view of the vital interests involved: order on the one hand and freedom on the other. But a gradual, selective and guarded extension of functions is clearly indicated. Ranade attached the greatest importance to an effective system of local self-government as a foundation of national democracy. If the reforms suggested by him are realised in the proper spirit local government may be expected to play a very much more important part in the structure of public administration in India than it does at present.

Ranade was a careful and discerning student of political institutions. By his instinct as well as by his study he was convinced that only those constitutions which have an element of balance in them can be trusted to work smoothly and fruitfully.⁵

5. The principal business of the central authority should be to give instructions and to lay down fixed principles, and it should leave the local bodies to apply them in practice. Election by popular suffrage enlists public confidence in the acts of Government; and when a majority of elected representatives are duly mixed with a minority possessed of educational and property qualifications, and these at present must be the nominees of the central authorities, the organization so secured can alone afford full scope for the development of the political education of the people and the growth of that self-reliant energy, which is the best support and the highest justification of coercive rule.—(E. 214-15.)

Democrat as he was, he was, conscious of the one-sidedness of the democratic principle. In awarding equal franchise to all the qualitative value of opinion is thoroughly lost, and yet for the free expression of will and popular association with authority a widespread and uniform franchise is a necessary feature of a constitutional democracy. The only way in which the qualitative shortcomings of a popular assembly can be corrected without undermining its democratic character is to provide for a minority of nominated members. The number of such persons is too small to enable them to dominate the decision of the house. But as nomination or co-option at the hands of a popular authority is likely to be sufficiently in conformity with the state of party composition the selection that is rendered possible on account of direct nomination will result in adding talent without withdrawing power from the people at large. The nominated minority will, by its position, exercise only a healthy influence, but in no case effective power.

A national federation in which the principle of local autonomy and popular government would be carried to the utmost limit compatible with order and with a minimum standard of progress among the component units was thus the ideal administrative structure that Ranade desired for India. He was slave to no single dogma or theoretical principle. To evolve the Indian system of government out of our natural needs and aptitudes was his object. At a time when the whole administrative structure of India is, in a way, being put into the melting pot these ideas of Ranade are of more than passing value.

CHAPTER X

NATIONAL EDUCATION

"I think our best examples in this respect are furnished by Agastya with his wife Lopamudra, Atri with his wife Anusuya, and Vasistha with his wife Arundhati among the ancient Rishis, and in our own times by men like Dr. Bhandarkar on our side, Diwan Bahadur Raghunatha Row in Madras, the late Keshab Chander Sen and Babu Pratap Chandra Mozumdar and Pandit Shivrath Shastri in Bengal, and Lala Hansa Raj and Lala Munshi Ram in the Punjab. A race that can ensure a continuance of such teachers can, in my opinion, never fail, and with the teaching of such to guide and instruct and inspire us, I, for one, am confident that the time will be hastened when we may be vouchsafed a sight of the Promised Land." (M. 246-7).

The purposefulness and the comprehension of Ranade's thought are nowhere seen to better advantage than in his views on education. He was fully conscious of the vital need to educate the new generation in the spirit as also the methods of the new life of freedom and creativeness which he wanted to see realised in India. Not only for the individual but also for the community, and in fact for humanity at large, life was a great adventure. The law of biological evolution applied to all aspects of life, and those alone could hope to live a life of progress who could make the best use of their surroundings. Not as a blood-thirsty struggle for paltry ends but as a process of natural selection, survival of the fittest was the rule. Ranade knew that India had not in the past escaped from the application of this law and if it ever cared to rise from its lowly position among nations it could only be by appreciating all the lessons of the human struggle.¹

No nation as no individual can be found without its own strong and weak points and a change in circumstances

1. This is the direction in which we must work if we would avoid lagging behind in the ranks in the struggle with stronger races.—(M. 314).

often makes for an alteration in our scale of estimation. For a nation, therefore, constantly to keep abreast of the times the process of continuous adaptation has to be consciously gone through. This adaptation is needed in all aspects of human life. From the strictly physical standpoint it is clear that unless all the powers of the body and mind are fully cultivated the race cannot stand up to its full responsibilities and make the best of its opportunities. Even for the higher purposes of human life a good physical equipment is needed. This remark applies as much to the physical well being and strength of the people as to the supply of material means with which to carry out these purposes. If a people are to be the instruments of their own and of humanity's progress this can hardly be reached unless materially and physically they are well endowed. It must be recognised by the community that these essential things must be first attended to.

Mere physical strength, however, fails to secure either survival or progress. Along with physical powers it is necessary to cultivate intellectual and moral talents as well. In fact these are the essentially human faculties and must be specially nursed. Not only do these faculties help humanity to overcome the challenge of non-human creation, but the degree of progress attained by individual groups of the human race is mostly traceable to their possession of these qualities. Intellect not only as a power but also as an instrument of achievement has to be well developed and kept alert for constant inventiveness and adaptation. Only such nations as show a high degree of intellectual vigour have been able to hold their own in the progress of the human species. Ranade was fully conscious of this all important need of intellectual virility and strength. He did not, however, overlook the equally great need for the development of a suitable moral sense which would guide the activities of the intellect.

A one sided cultivation of the powers of the intellect may give prosperity and power to a nation. But unless a corresponding alteration has taken place in the moral sense of the community neither peace nor justice can be assured. In the absence of these two a powerful and rich community can be as unhappy as a poor and dependent one. A balance has to be

maintained in the acquisition and use of the power that knowledge brings. As social organisation is very sensitive to the needs and opportunities of the acquisition of power and wealth the main object of a watchful and sensitive society must be to see that no undesirable institutions and practices are tolerated. Unless a constant renewal of our faith in the beneficence of existing institutions is assured these tend to stagnate and decay. A community whose institutions are not in full accord with the aspirations, needs and possibilities of its situation is at best a sick society, and in competition with other healthier and more virile communities it stands a poor chance of survival. For physical as well as for cultural achievement Ranade could visualise the full implications of a position of organised strength and hence he desired to produce in India a type of mental outlook and physical organisation which was a help in the cause of India's liberation and progress.

It is well known that as a student Ranade himself was a voracious reader and even in later times reading on a variety of subjects was almost as necessary to his being as the things that satisfied his creature comforts. It is, however, remarkable that he never lapsed into pedantry, nor did he desire that students should be choked with a very heavy dose of ill-assorted learning. In his view it was of the utmost importance that students should be made to feel, soon after the initial stage of elementary education is passed, the unity of the world movement. Strong nationalist that Ranade was, he was both by instinct and conviction a stronger internationalist. Indeed it would be more correct to say that he was physically conscious of this higher role of brotherhood of man and citizenship of the world. It was given to Ranade to look upon the entire process of human life as one whole and to adjust his immediate conduct to what he thought to be his duty in the wider, and for him the most important, context.

He wanted every young Indian to be aware of his high descent and higher destiny at as early a stage as possible. Any education that would give a lopsided, a sectional or a narrow view of the heritage and promise of the human race was not an education for progress. A nation had to realise its

allotted part in the larger human scheme so that it could discharge the same most efficiently.² It would be too much to hope that the full implications of such a high ideal could be usefully imparted to persons belonging to all levels of intellectual and moral perception. But a system of education has deliberately to provide for such instruction so that at least the leading lights of the community and a large section of the people would be enabled to see their immediate interests against the background of a very much wider process. By realising one's place in a big scheme not only is a wholesome sense of proportion induced in the utterances and claims of a people, but a sense of inspired dignity is imparted to all its efforts. What Ranade had undoubtedly realised in his own person he wanted every Indian to realise. The system of education, he thought, ought to emphasize the wider human and universal significance of the efforts of each individual and each people.

As Ranade advocated a realisation of the unity of the different branches of human progress he argued with equal strength in favour of the unity of all knowledge. All aspects of human perception and experience are in essence one, and full knowledge is not possible even within the limitations under which we have to work unless the inner relationships of the different departments of knowledge are appreciated by the learner. While one cannot actually learn everything one can keep an open mind on the bearings of other fields of knowledge on his own special subject. Moreover one can always try and assure oneself that one at least knows the kind of influence that the various departments of knowledge have on one another and the collective significance that they have for human progress. The divisions among the habitations, appearance and practices of the different branches of the human race were comparatively unimportant and superficial facts as compared to the essential unity of the achievements and possibilities of the whole species. While working for the progress of the particular section the

2. In addition to these lessons, our new teachers must know how to introduce their pupils to a correct appreciation of the forces which are at work in the wider world outside and which, in spite of temporary checks or seeming reverses, represent all that is best in human efforts for the elevation and happiness of man.—(M. 246).

well-being of the whole human community has to be attended to. While cultivating individual fields of knowledge the unity of all aspects of the intellectual heritage of advancing humanity has to be appreciated at its full worth.

These remarks may lead one to suspect that Ranade expected too much either from the social or the educational system. As a matter of fact the fear is unfounded. Once the perception of wider unity was honestly and firmly realised he would not allow it to butt in on the detailed walks of social or intellectual activity. On the contrary he was eager to distinguish clearly between general and special courses of study. According to the aptitudes of the mind of the learner and according to the relative academic and practical importance of each branch of knowledge suitable courses of instruction had to be provided for all. If for no other reason at least for economising the intellectual and material resources of a nation Ranade would draw the line of necessary instruction, both in general and special courses, very much more effectively than those whose interest in education is a purely professional one. He would not think of wasting any human exertion or material means on what he did not feel convinced was both necessary and possible.

While Ranade urged upon the teachers the necessity of taking to their duties in a spirit of national and wider human service he was far from expecting them or their students to live a life of seclusion and renunciation such as that of the ancient monasteries. Having picked out the weak points in Indian outlook and organisation he wanted the teachers to concentrate their efforts on overcoming these defects and on nursing the development of those traits which were helpful to national progress. Above everything else Ranade was eager to root out the feeling of submissiveness entertained by the rank and file of our people. Authority either of tradition or of power was usually enough to secure obedience for almost anything in India. Ranade was a respecter of tradition in that he would not care to change it unless he was convinced that the change was beneficent. The coercive power of the state had also a legitimate part to play in social regulation for which Ranade was prepared. But whether

it was tradition or power the obedience offered by the people to either of them should, in the opinion of Ranade, be the result of a reasoned choice and not of blind habit or fear.

The habit of informed as well as free thinking can grow only as a result of a suitable system of education. Physical submission is almost always the result of intellectual and moral submission. Ranade appealed to the educationists to so order their systems of instruction as to create and develop among the students both the desire and capacity for independent thinking. The force of a truthful and genuine thought or idea is after all the motive power of all progress, and Ranade felt that the freedom of thinking inculcated among students should not stop at a mere negative stage of criticism or complaisance. The new light should be reflected in creative channels. To achieve this purpose a strong tradition of active research must be created among our scholars. Ranade was mindful of the great value of example in this respect and hence he urged upon the teachers themselves the necessity of active and creative scholarship. Whether we take the natural or the social sciences, or literature and art, there is too little of independent thinking and much less of creative contribution. He did not by any means undervalue the importance of our contact with foreign sources; in fact by example and precept he himself had argued in favour of a full acquaintance with the advance previously made in each field of knowledge. Learning, in Ranade's opinion, could not be said to flower and bear fruit until it made its own contribution to the progress of human knowledge as a whole.

While internationalism in the political and economic sphere was yet a dream, in the field of intellectual achievement it had already reached a considerable degree of development. To try and plough a lonely furrow of one's own mental activity without contact with similar activities in the contemporary world of thought was mostly futile. It was necessary to establish contacts with centres of individual and organised efforts for the promotion of learning. Neither contentment nor isolation is suitable to a learner who wants at once to economise his effort and to employ his activity in a really useful channel. The example set by teachers and advanced students

in the sphere of their own respective pursuits has an unmistakable effect on the attitude of the general mass of students. Once an intellectual tradition of wide co-operation and creative contribution is set up in the sphere of intellectual and scientific activity, it gradually permeates the mass mind in the same way. From small beginnings the current of genuine thought gathers force and in due course becomes a significant part of the world's heritage of knowledge.

Ranade often harked back to the memory of the times when exactly such a spirit pervaded the thinkers and academies of India. The contributions made by many of our ancient Rishis to philosophical and sociological literature are still preserved as masterpieces of independent and creative human thought. Not only from Indian scholars but from the discerning and competent observers from all lands tributes have continued to flow eulogising and holding up as examples many of these contributions. Ranade desired to revive the spirit of those palmy days of Indian scholarship and to bring to bear on new problems the light and the vigour of the old tradition. It was not, however, with a purely scholastic purpose that Ranade made his appeal to teachers and students alike. He had in view in all that he said, or did the promotion of the central cause of Indian regeneration and progress. Just as in the earlier days of Aryan immigration into India the new colonists had to consolidate their ranks in the face of powerful material and intellectual difficulties now the new challenge of the Western influences necessitated a fresh orientation in the outlook and practices of the people.³ The teachers of the community were to be the leaders who were to inspire their pupils with the ambition of repeating in their own generation the constructive efforts of their remote forefathers. All learning was to aim at interpreting the aspirations of the race and outlining the method in which the same can be achieved. While the great obstacles in the way could not be ignored they

3. Of course the teachings and the methods and the subjects taught in these days must be made to suit our new exigencies and environments, but the spirit animating the teachings must be the same as that which led the first settlers to cross the Vindhya Range, and establish their colonies in the South.—(M. 245-46).

ought not to deter us from enthusiastically discharging our duty and fulfilling our mission.

Ranade's own conception of this national mission has been recorded in some earlier places. To work out by peaceful yet active methods of assimilation a fusion of cultures so that a common human culture may grow and live in freedom and progress was the final object of the oft-suspended but steadily resumed course of Indian evolution. The periods of inaction were those during which the light of knowledge and truth failed the people. It was up to the teachers to see that so far as it lay in themselves the light would not again fail those who were committed to their care for instruction. Such a steady and continuous upholding of the mission of the people and of their duty in its fulfilment would not be barren of results. As has been said about Wellington's success at Waterloo that it was achieved on the fields of Eton the intellectual and material conquests of renaissance India were to be first made on the floor of its schools and academies. Only a generation that was trained for its special purpose could achieve such a stupendous task as was involved in the objective of supplying a prototype and nucleus of world unification and progress.

The task of regeneration, consolidation and progress that awaited the efforts of the reformer in India itself was sufficiently gigantic to engage the energies of almost all the workers of even such a populous country as India. Internal problems of inter-caste and inter-communal unity were such as to engage the full energies of even the most gifted and resourceful of peoples. The need for intellectual and scientific advance was urgent. Industrial progress was a prime necessity of an adequate and constantly improving standard of life. The establishment of a government which would represent the united will of a free and advancing people had to be attended to. All these tasks would no doubt tax to the limit all the powers of the nation. Ranade did not underestimate the weight of all these pressing obligations and he suggested an early and systematic training of the young so that they may be capable of bearing these responsibilities. He was not, however, inclined to limit the intellectual and emotional horizon of the new generation to the frontiers of what is now known as India. There was once a greater India

and Ranade hoped that there would be one again. As, however, the earlier conquests of Hinduism were not the conquests of the sword so much as conquests of superior culture the new dream which was to inspire the efforts of the Indian people was to carry the message of unity, deliverance and progress to the farthest end of the world. No doubt the career of spreading influence would start in lands which were geographically nearer and culturally related to India. Expansiveness was a prime necessity in a living culture and Ranade was eager to see that the teachers were alive to the final ends of the movement in which they and their pupils were to play their allotted parts.

Culture is a term which has been often misused. More often it has been used to cover a very ambiguous collection of ideas and practices. Ranade suffered least from this tendency towards loose and confused thinking. He knew what he was aiming at when he spoke of the renovated Indian culture. He wanted that science should be studied with a view to serve human needs. He desired that arts should be developed to improve the finer sensibilities of the people. He wanted that these and other advantages of a progressive social life should not be confined to a select few, though the actual measure of each person's advantage may in some measure depend upon his individual contribution and functional need. While he was ready to allow each person perfect freedom, to think out his own spiritual problem in his own way and in association with people of his own way of thinking, he insisted upon the unity of the human race and of human progress. While eager to share the good points in his faith with others who were ready to appreciate the same he was equally prepared to absorb any contribution that another group of people or system of thought had to offer. Unity, freedom, progress—not for one but for all—this was his objective and this he thought would be the characteristics of the new Indian culture. This was a life of effort, service and satisfaction which it was worth while living. It was the promise of a free, united, progressive world inhabited by the whole brotherhood of man. It was the most exalted and extensive conception of good life that has ever been conceived as being an object of practical social and political reform. With his sturdy optimism Ranade felt that even

though the immediate contribution that any one people or generation could make to the realisation of such an ideal was bound to be small, the progress of nations would be directed along right lines if every new generation in all lands was trained to the full implications of its destiny on earth. He expected the teachers to entertain such high idealism in themselves and to preach it to their pupils.

With such an exalted conception of the functions of education it was not surprising that Ranade desired to revive the very charming and inspiring tradition of personal loyalty between the teacher and the pupils.⁴ In a world of mercenary interests the relations between the teachers and the taught are degenerating to a purely contractual level. This is regrettable in the extreme. Even if we view the new development of a purely occupational mind among the teachers and a narrowly bargaining attitude among the learners from the standpoint of the best development of learning as an art, the lack of traditional attachment to the truth passed on by the teachers is a definite drawback. While retaining a questioning mind on all that one hears or reads we must make a genuine attempt to acquaint ourselves with the progress made before our own time. A certain respectfulness towards the achievements of our predecessors and teachers is necessary to induce this receptivity. We need not be blind worshippers either of our teachers or of our ancestors. But they have an important part in the process of our own enlightenment and by our respectful and loyal bearing towards them we improve the chances of deriving real benefit out of our contact with these. Ranade knew that much of the responsibility to create and maintain these relationships rests upon the teachers themselves. By their learning, industry and idealism they must inspire feelings of love and respect among their pupils. If both of them play their own role properly the mutual relationship constitutes a great academic and social advantage.

4. By reviving our ancient traditions in this matter we may hope in the near future to instil into the minds of our young generations lessons of devotion to learning, diversity of studies and personal loyalty to the teacher without which no system of school or college education can ever bear any fruit.—(M. 246).

The teacher's own devotion to learning is primarily instrumental in promoting a similar attitude of mind among the pupils. It is perhaps true that isolated and unique cases of devotion to learning would occur even in the absence of a well trained and fully devoted body of teachers. But the regeneration and advancement of a continental nation cannot take effect through the intellectual achievements of these exceptional individuals. A whole series of 'schools of thought'—devoted, independent and creative—is needed if the light and leadership needed to enlighten the whole mass of the people is to be supplied in the required measure. Such schools can grow only if a sufficiently large body of devoted scholars and teachers could be found. Ranade was aware of the multiplicity of pursuits connected with the assimilation of all existing knowledge and the effort to add to the same. A nation which has lost its powers of assimilation and creation in the sphere of intellectual pursuits was not likely to achieve much in the more material and physical spheres. As the foundation of all the movement of cultural and material regeneration, Ranade was eager to see an extensive development of seats of genuine learning and scientific tradition.

It is clear that even the purely technical progress of science cannot be steadily expected unless it is well organised under the leadership of able teachers and is conducted with the full co-operation of a devoted body of students. But the progress of science and the attainment of knowledge are themselves in a way only a means to an end. The end is to ennoble human life and to develop the creative faculties of man. These objects are essentially moral in their implications and can be hardly achieved unless the necessary emotional background and training are supplied by the teachers. Intellectually, morally and emotionally the teachers are in such a crucial position of advantage in relation to their students that if only they used their opportunities well a veritable revolution in the mind of the people may take place. If the desired mental attitudes are created the task of the actual realisation of national objectives is rendered considerably easier. In keeping with the older tradition of Aryan civilisation Ranade wanted scholars, teachers and selfless leaders to realise in them-

selves the highest ideal of a good life and to propagate it successfully in India and in the outside world.⁵

Most of the instruction that is imparted in primary and secondary schools is of the nature of a general preparation for life. Intensive training in any one branch of knowledge can start only at the collegiate stage. The physical and the intellectual development that is needed to make the best use of a purposive system of education is also secured at the colleges. Hence Ranade was particularly keen on organising it according to a plan suitable to the role which he desired the university-trained men to play in the national movement. Knowing that the habits of isolation were deep-rooted in our recent past he suggested a system whereby residence at the college was to be enforced as a rule.⁶

Habits of corporate thought and action must grow among those who were to supply light and leading to others. Modern life makes a call on our capacities for purposeful co-operation in

5. Our teachers must enable their pupils to realize the dignity of man as man, and to apply the necessary correctives to tendencies towards exclusiveness, which have grown in us with the growth of ages. They must see that our thoughts, speech, and actions are inspired by a deep love of humanity, and that our conduct and worship are freed where necessary from the bondage of custom and made to conform as far as possible to the surer standard of our conscience. We must at the same time be careful that this class of teachers does not form a new order of monks. Much good, I am free to admit, has been done in the past and is being done in these days, in this as well as other countries by those who take the vow of lifelong celibacy and who consecrate their lives to the service of man and the greater glory of our Maker. But it may be doubted how far such men are able to realize life in all its fulness and in all its varied relations, and I think our best examples in this respect are furnished by Agastya with his wife Lopamudra, Atri with his wife Anusuya, and Vasistha with his wife Arundhati among the ancient Rishis, and in our own times by men like Dr. Bhandarkar on our side, Diwan Bahadur Raghunatha Row in Madras, the late Keshab Chander Sen and Babu Pratap Chandra Mozumdar and Pandit Shrivnath Shastri in Bengal, and Lala Hansa Raj and Lala Munshi Ram in the Punjab. A race that can ensure a continuance of such teachers can in my opinion, never fail, and with the teachings of such men to guide and instruct and inspire us, I for one am confident that the time will be hastened when we may be vouchsafed a sight of the Promised Land. (M. 246-7).

6. Enforced residence in colleges should, therefore, be encouraged and made general. (M. 314).

a variety of subjects. As the units of private social life become smaller and smaller when industrialism advances, virtues of co-operative action have to be inculcated by institutions which are specially designed for the purpose. A mere exhortation to act collectively and in unison is not enough.

Residence at college not only necessitates co-operative action along lines which have to evolve by common thought brought to bear on common problems but it involves a wide contact from hour to hour with a variety of people. Economic, religious, communal and other differences have to be got over and subordinated to the common academic and corporate purpose. The creation of a nation is in essence the process of inculcation among all the members of a society of a strong desire to live together based not only on emotional affinities but also on a real appreciation of the advantages of common life. It is well-nigh impossible to bring this truth home to the whole population by personal experience even before they enter life. If, however, those who will be chiefly instrumental in shaping the thought of the community have themselves been deeply imbued with the national feeling the rest are suitably led. It is indeed true that common life among the university students is capable of creating social virtues as well as social evils. That is why Ranade laid down an educational policy of knowledge, unity and progress before he outlined the form that our institutions of higher education should take. As an integral part of a scheme of planned and purposeful education the system of compulsory residence at colleges would certainly produce a very beneficent effect on national life.

Residence of almost all connected with the colleges on the premises of the institution would facilitate a scheme of intensive training which has not yet been fully utilised in our country. With perhaps a few exceptions the life of a student, and in several cases even that of the teacher, is very indifferently organised. There is so much waste of time and energy. Whatever other reasons there may be for such a state of things it is clear that the very short stay during the hours of a day that most students have to make on the college premises is an important factor which leads to this apparent waste of valuable human resources. For the time spent by our youths in

education the quantity and quality of instruction received by them is very much less than what is either needed or is feasible. A more intensive course of training, however, is difficult of achievement unless all the hours of the student's life during a term are devoted to his legitimate educational work. What Ranade had in view was a restoration in altered form of the old Indian tradition of teachers and pupils living a common life of devotion to learning and virtue according to the prevalent ideas and opportunities of the community. In their present form most of our colleges are far from realising this ideal. They neither conform to the Indian ideas on the subject nor do they reproduce the best part of the modern university organisation as it prevails in the most progressive and successful countries of the world. The colleges have to be colonies of commonly inspired people, and while they are members of the colony they must devote almost the entire part of their being to the realisation of the object for which such institutions are established and maintained by the community. It must be admitted that if a rational valuation in terms of their declared objects were to be made very few collegiate institutions would come up to the mark. Such a straying away from the chosen path and acquiescence in low standards of efficiency would contravene the very purpose for which Ranade wanted to create such institutions.

It should not be supposed from this emphasis on a whole-time education that Ranade wanted to pour down the ears of the pupils a continued flow of theoretical and intellectual learning. In fact, more than any other educationist of his times Ranade was convinced that physical instruction and bodily development are the very foundations of culture and progress.⁷ This thought was impressed upon him by two considerations. The earlier alumni of our colleges imbibed a liking for ways of living which were far from healthy. The pressure of studies was also heavy on the more conscientious and earnest-minded among them. Early deaths among the educated were becoming almost a social danger, and the subject has

7. Physical exercise should be made a part of college discipline and allowance should be made for success in it along with literary qualifications. —(M., 314).

been exhaustively discussed by Ranade in one of his essays. A course of instruction in physical training was indicated as one of the remedies to meet the situation. This was, however, not the main source of Ranade's enthusiasm for physical education. Apart from a strong and continuous tradition of physical culture that obtained in the Deccan, as in several other parts of India, Ranade was influenced by the Greek conception of a perfect life.

The central idea of Greek culture was to perfect all the good faculties of the individual citizen and his collective life in the state. Physical and aesthetic, no less than intellectual and moral, training was necessary to develop the full personality of the citizen. According to Ranade physical education was not to be a subsidiary part of the course of instruction, much less a mere concession to a passing exigency. Credit for physical fitness and development was to be given in the same way as in the other subjects. Nobody would be taken to have satisfactorily carried out the course of instruction set for a given degree or examination unless he showed a minimum of development in his physical as well as intellectual studies. A balanced, proportionate and full development of personality was the goal for the individual as well as the society, and it was the function of education to equip people with the means of achieving the same.

As Ranade cared more for the substance of knowledge than for its outward form, and even more for the right method of acquiring knowledge than for the actual information gathered, he set little store by examinations. So long as the course prescribed for a test is systematically carried out and an evidence of satisfactory progress is gathered from the teachers themselves the University should be ready to recognise the worth of the candidate. The attempt should be to minimise examinations not to multiply them, and even when an examination was instituted it should aim at being a real test than merely a hard one. Too great a frequency of hard examinations coming at the end of an unorganised and ill-distributed study of heavy courses was found to have an undesirable effect on the health of the student. Moreover, the academic

value of such intermittent tests not preceded by a regular system of coaching was far from assured. Hence Ranade definitely desired to supersede the current emphasis on examinations by well-planned courses of study and their regular pursuit by students and teachers according to a well-distributed plan. It was to be the purpose of education to ensure that the desired knowledge was got by the desired method. Mere examinations could not achieve this; hence Ranade's insistence on a regular system of instruction and a well-distributed plan of coaching.

A tendency towards an elaboration of courses in advance of the progress of teaching talent, library and laboratory equipment and scholarly enthusiasm, which is visible in many a university, did not commend itself to Ranade. In this as in all other matters Ranade set no limits to the ultimate goal of progress. The lines of progress must arise out of our needs and capacities, and first needs must come first. Comparatively simple and easy courses were a great advantage to the student to make a proper choice and study.⁸ Even for the teacher such courses were preferable to excessive specialisation or unsystematic intermixing of subjects. The very advanced student or one who has an academic ambition can be led by his teacher into all the intricacies of his subject, but the courses of general study at a university ought to keep in view the wider purpose of sending out into the world well-trained and well-equipped leaders of the several aspects of the community's life. These would in due course be able to avail themselves of the assistance of specialist experts who may be turned out by research institutes which may be attached to the University. A college and a university are however something very much wider in their appeal than a mere research institute. The latter has a purely scholastic or academic purpose to perform. A college and a university have, in addition to their academic function, a social and moral utility. While the academic function is not subordinated to the wider social one it has to be discharged in a fashion compatible with the needs of the community.

8. Our next efforts should be directed towards simplifying the course of studies and diminishing the stiffness and the frequency of examinations, (M. 314).

According to Ranade this dissociation between the purely academic work of educational institutions and the life and needs of the community was nowhere so clearly marked as in the neglect of vernacular languages. Since the days of Ranade the situation in this respect has slightly improved. There is a wide recognition of the fact that vernacular languages must be developed and utilised on a very much wider scale than before. The guiding principles of the new policy of favouring the vernaculars has, however, yet to be clearly stated and wisely co-ordinated. In this work of chalking out a suitable policy Ranade's views on the subject are bound to prove very valuable. Ranade clearly distinguished between two uses of vernaculars, one as a medium of instruction and the other as a subject of study. According as a genuine school of scientific and cultural studies grows in the different linguistic areas of the country the use of the vernaculars as a medium must indeed be popularised and adopted. In the early days of university education in India to which Ranade himself belonged this stage had not been reached.

The situation has since improved and at any rate for the pre-university stage the vernaculars are in wide use as media of instruction. Experience gained hitherto has strengthened the legitimate hopes of the vernacularists. The understanding of the subject and the adequacy of expression are definitely improved with the adoption of the vernacular medium. It has no doubt been found that the knowledge of English is adversely affected by the change. This is, however, by no means unexpected. The idea underlying the adoption of vernaculars as media is definitely to reduce the attention given by the general body of students to their English studies, and to increase the time available for other studies. During the period of transition, when vernaculars have yet to be adopted in the university as media of study, it is desirable to insist upon a high standard of English knowledge from those who seek admission to colleges. In universities where such a precaution has not been taken the level of collegiate instruction has suffered a setback. This is, however, an avoidable drawback and cannot detract from the material improvement gained in the shape of a better and easier understanding of the subjects themselves.

While the use of vernaculars as media in colleges has to be postponed for a while, pending further improvement in the vernacular literature on all subjects and a more harmonious adjustment between linguistic and administrative divisions of the land, everything immediately possible must be done to bridge the gulf between university education and the cultural life of the community. Ranade who was a member of the Syndicate of the University of Bombay had proposed with the support of a large number of fellows that at the various degree examinations candidates should be required to write an essay in their respective vernaculars. The underlying idea of the proposal was to develop among graduates a familiarity with and an ease in vernacular expression which were then sadly lacking. This proposal was, however, negatived on the grounds that it would increase the burden of candidates, that it would be hard on those who had no recognised vernacular of their own, and that it would not promote a literary study of the languages. All these objections were flimsy in the extreme and were indicative only of the general disfavour meted out to vernaculars by educational authorities.

Ranade did not give up the attempt to promote the cause of the vernaculars, and after several strenuous attempts he succeeded in securing the inclusion of vernaculars among subjects which could be offered as optional papers for the B. A. examination. The beginning thus made has since been considerably extended and as optional subjects the vernaculars have been included in most university examinations. All this is a welcome extension of Ranade's attempt at securing due recognition for the vernaculars. Ranade's expectation and desire that educated people should popularise their knowledge through the vernaculars has also been well fulfilled by later developments. Individual citizens who have a liking for writing and public work have done much to enlighten those who have no direct access to English sources. Several institutions have been established for the purpose of translating into vernaculars useful books in foreign languages. Ranade himself was associated with the founding of such institutions in several parts of the Deccan. As yet, however, no organised effort has been made either by the universities or by government depart-

ments to initiate a regular series of extension lectures on several topics of cultural and material interests.⁹ Several stray efforts made hitherto indicate the usefulness of the work and if a regular system of extension lectures could be incorporated in the educational organisation of the country it would serve a very high national purpose. Ranade felt that the purpose of educational effort was not completed till it reached the masses.

Ranade desired to organise the whole nation for the purpose of realising its own conception of the good life for the individual as well as the society. Willing membership of this association and a faith in the creed of national progress were for him the essentials of citizenship. It was as much to the interest of the state as to that of the individual that, at as early a stage in a man's life as possible, these patriotic qualities should be inculcated in the mind of the young generation. Even after the initial training is imparted the moral as well as intellectual qualities of good citizenship require to be refreshed and readapted to changing circumstances and needs. For this reason a well directed organisation of educational institutions and extension courses ought to be made an integral part of national life. Without laying emphasis on any narrow denominational loyalty and without leaving such things to the private associations concerned, the state ought to take the lead in organising and at least partially financing the cause of national education. Expenditure of money and effort incurred on this score was more than fully justified as much as a means of national progress as an end of civilised life.

9. The University should not, as at present, wean away its children after their graduation, but should adopt measures by which it can retain its elevating connection with the graduates in their after life and conversation. This can best be done by encouraging a modified scheme of University Extension.—(M. 314).

CHAPTER XI

LESSONS OF HISTORY

“The hidden tendencies of caste exclusiveness and sacerdotal pride soon began to manifest themselves, and to this was joined an utter incapacity to realise the claims of a higher civilisation, and to study the development of arts and sciences, and the advantages of a liberal social polity, and a purer religion. Our failure to realise this higher life brought on the final collapse before any outside influences were brought to bear upon us. This seems to be the moral which the study of these papers is fitly calculated to teach the inquirer into our past history, and it will be well if all our writers and publicists would take that lesson to heart and profit by it.” (M. 380).

Even before he became a judge Ranade was a college teacher. Among the subjects that he taught was included history, and it is clear from his published writings on history and economics that by adopting the profession of a judge in preference to that of a scholar, Ranade, though unintentionally, denied to the large circle of students a very rich feast of scholarly writings on these subjects. Even that which he could write during the short leisure snatched from the preoccupations of a busy life of public and official activity is a very much more valuable contribution to scientific literature than has been possible for many a professional scholar. But the high quality of Ranade's writings in the field of history cannot but create a specially ardent feeling of further expectation from the pen of so versatile and creative a genius,

Even as a student Ranade took more than normal interest in his historical studies. Partly this was due to his habit of thoroughness, but in a large measure it must be clear that Ranade was almost irresistibly attracted to the study of history. To anyone whose human sympathies are warm and who seeks for a meaning in the changing currents of human experience history supplies a most exhilarating and enlightening study. It

is on record that Ranade's teachers at college had perceived in Ranade's work unmistakable signs both of his wide reading and of his independence of judgment. Soon after the middle of the last century was a time too near the political transition in India for anybody to lose interest in history. It is quite obvious both from Ranade's career as also from his writings that an ardent desire to know what was wrong with India of the recent past and what should be done to set it up again on its legs were questions that were agitating Ranade's mind. While he was thus moved by warm emotional sympathies he had also a clear understanding and a cool judgment. Like a doctor of nations he wanted to study the case. In common with one of his near friends he had planned a whole scheme of historical studies. Owing to the pressure of circumstances the plan was only partially carried out and almost the whole burden fell on Ranade himself. All the same Ranade gave to the world as a fruit of this resolution the epoch-making book on Indian history, 'Rise of the Maratha Power.'

An account of Ranade's interest in historical events generally and those of Maratha history especially would not be complete without a mention of the religious and spiritual bias of his thought. It has been made clear in an earlier chapter that Ranade was deeply, almost passionately, religious. He was not, however, credulous or weak-minded on that account. A sturdy confidence both in the normal reason of humanity and its influence for good when allowed to work out its own ends made for a spirit of protestantism which was characteristic of Ranade. The prevalent schools of religion were mostly taken up with dogmas and rites. Ranade cared more for moral betterment and spiritual bliss than for conformity to set opinions and practices. There can be no moral reform except through the intellectual and practical efforts of the individual himself and in the absence of a moral balance between belief and experience there can be no moral peace. A habit of active and independent thought and a sustained effort at bringing actual life in line with intellectual ends were the essence of a religion fit for free men.

Ranade protested against ritualistic and credulous religion. He stood for a direct communion between man and his God.

He believed that liberation and constructive achievement were the results of one's own endeavour. It was such a spirit of protestantism which had heralded the dawn of nationalism and progress in Western Europe. Ranade discerned in the history of the Marathas just such an influence, and he tried to piece together the incidents of Maratha history so as to read as a connected and significant account of the growth of a people's independence. Such a view of Maratha history, in fact of the history of most of the Eastern countries, was out of keeping with the prevalent view among European historians. Viewing the record of Maratha history in the light of his own informed and inspired experience Ranade felt called upon to demolish the framework of the English presentment of the happenings in Maharashtra.¹ Not only did Ranade thus render an invaluable service to the Maratha nation, but he by his writings initiated a school of self-reliant and constructive interpretation of India's national history. The fact that his interpretation was backed by unimpeachable sources—English and vernacular—only raised him to the level of a great historical scholar and lent weight to the many orientations in which his book abounds.

In three basic particulars Ranade claimed a national status for the history of the Maratha people.² He claimed firstly that the objects of the participants in the several incidents of Maratha history were essentially political as distinguished from religious or communal. In the second place he showed that the upheaval which resulted in the establishment of Maratha

1. My aim is rather to present a clear view of the salient features of the history from the Indian standpoint, to remove many misapprehensions which detract much from the moral interest and the political lessons of the story, and, above all, to enlist the sympathy of the representatives of the conquering British power in the fortunes of its worsted rival.—(R. ii).

2. The lessons it seeks to illustrate are (1) that the rise of Maratha power was not a mere accident due to any chance combination, but was a genuine effort on the part of a Hindu nationality, not merely to assert its independence, but to achieve what had not been attempted before, the formation of a Confederacy of States animated by a common patriotism, and (2) that the success it achieved was due to a general upheaval social, religious, and political of all classes of the population. The attempt failed; but even the failure was itself an education in highest virtues, and possibly intended to be a preparatory discipline to cement the union of the Indian races under British guidance.—(R. iv).

power over a wide territory was a mass movement which had stirred the people at large. And thirdly he pointed out that the spirit of self-confidence which was created by the religious and political movements was the most outstanding thread that holds together the various incidents of Maratha history and which was left as the net achievement of the Maratha people even after their conquest at the hands of superior British forces. An irrepressible desire to order one's own life in one's own way and a persistent spirit of opposition to outside dictation are national characteristics of Maharashtra. The wave of religious protestantism that had spread over the country before the rise of Sivajee thrived on this innate independence of the people's character. That the Marathas have occasionally been conquered but that they have never been beaten was a truth that Ranade demonstrated by his study of Maratha history. He did this in no parochial or sentimental vein. As has been mentioned in an earlier chapter Ranade claimed for the whole country this attribute of inherent resistance to the inroads of conquering forces. After a period of inaction caused by impact with superior external forces the urge to self-preservation and freedom wells up again and slowly yet surely asserts itself.

The history of the Rajputs and of the Sikhs, not to mention that of the Muslim invaders, bears out this claim to possessing an irrepressible political urge. The Maratha movement had, however, a special virility and persistence that are not to be found in the same measure in other parts of the country. Ranade found an explanation for this phenomenon in the genuinely popular origin of the movement that resulted in the political achievements of the race. It is well-known that when Sivajee the Great was mustering to his standard his first adherents the landed aristocracy and the custodians of administrative and social power held aloof from the movement. In fact they branded the new movement first as the harebrained adventures of a few hot-heads and then as the grave act of rebellion against established authority. The middle classes of petty hereditary officials and the priestly families also held themselves aloof in the initial stages. The main body of adherents was drawn from among the common people, scions of petty farming families. The call of Sivajee to the standard of

national—territorial—freedom was eagerly and enthusiastically answered by these people. As their example put courage and conviction into the hearts of the middle classes they also joined the movement. The aristocracy was the last to reconcile itself to the new forces of self-reliance and freedom. In the end all classes came to be imbued with the passion for a free political life, and in the period of trial awaiting Maharashtra soon after the death of Sivajee hardly any section of the people shirked their national responsibility.

A superficial observation of the incidents associated with the rise of the Maratha power has rendered popular a version of the movement that is more exclusively religious in its appeal than is warranted by circumstances. It must be conceded that occasional cases of religious intolerance on the part of some Mahomedan rulers took place. But as a class the Mahomedan rulers of the southern principalities were extremely tolerant of the Hindu religious practices. In fact, it is no exaggeration to say that the problem of religious antagonism had already been solved. Not only in the sphere of metaphysical speculation but also in that of the practices associated with the two religions a considerable integration had taken place. This course was in keeping with the innate adaptability of Hindu thought which was the outcome of a continuous process of absorption. Metaphysical reconciliation and practical tolerance were further emphasised by the almost universal practice of the Mahomedan rulers of the South to appoint as their chief administrative and military officers leading persons among all classes of their subjects, including the Hindus. It is well-known that Shahajee the father of Sivajee wielded great political influence in the affairs of the South. As the movement for political freedom gathered strength it received support from the religious appeal to oppose a Mahomedan ruler. But in its origin the movement of opposition to the Mahomedan rulers of the southern principalities was not a religious but a purely political movement. The rule of the Badshahas was opposed not because they were Mahomedans, but because they were aliens, and also because their rule was not based on the inherited system of functional and territorial organisation which was characteristic of the old Hindu rule founded on village

autonomy. The Maratha movement which Sivajee led was thus a popular, political and democratic movement rather than a crusade for religious freedom.

Another significant point that Ranade urged in his book was also calculated to run counter to the popular version of the role played by Sivajee.³ Whether we judge him as a general, as an administrator or as a national leader Sivajee's place is undoubtedly amongst the heroes and great men of the world. To say, therefore, that the movement for political freedom had already started in various parts of Maharashtra and that Sivajee, instead of creating the movement for liberation, only captained it is not to detract from his greatness. Such an objective statement of the true position only lays bare the deeper roots of the national movement among the Marathas. Incidentally this observation helps to illustrate Ranade's views on the subject of the mutual influence of great men and their times. Much as he valued the contribution made by great leaders towards the progress of humanity Ranade did not believe that individuals, however great they may be, could run counter to the currents of their own times. They might accelerate or retard these deeper and wider forces and utilise them for the speedier achievement of the purposes indicated to them. At bottom the historical process is an objective process of which the subjective reactions of the people at large are only a part. The great men are more a product of their times than their authors. In any case for the success of their

3. The new danger required new tactics, but above all tactics, what was wanted was a new spirit, a common feeling of interest, a common patriotism born of a liberal religious fervour. The scattered power of the Maratha chiefs had to be united in a confederacy, animated by a common purpose, and sanctified by a common devotion to the country. Sivajee's great merit was that he realized this danger, kept the separatist tendency under control brought the common forces together in the name of a common religion, and he thus represented in himself, not only the power of the age, but the soul-stirring idea, the highest need and the highest purpose, that could animate the Marathas in a common cause. He did not create the Maratha power—that power had been already created, though scattered in small centres all over the country. He sought to unite it for a higher purpose by directing it against the common danger. This was his chief merit and his chief service to the country, and in this consists his chief claim upon the grateful remembrance of his people. (R. 37-38).

plans it is essential that the great heroes should get enough support from their surroundings. Many potentially great men fail to reveal themselves on account of the incompatibility of their material context. No really great men are ever born out of their times or without long preparation. This is only another way of saying that the leaders and the followers are both creatures of an objective circumstance which is more powerful than both taken in isolation, but which can be considerably influenced by the two in unison.

The organisation that Sivajee favoured for the administration of his widening territory is illustrative of his position vis - a - vis the Maratha movement as a whole. Sivajee undoubtedly was the central sun who gave inspiration, light and warmth to all who came within his influence. But the followers were an integral part of the whole situation, and it was through them that the roots of the national movement were held secure in the parent land. In setting up his cabinet - the Ashtapradhan - Sivajee was guided not only by the well-known administrative principles of division of functions and unity of counsel but also by the desire to engraft his system of government on the traditional functionalism of Hindu organisation. Under his able leadership this organisation worked most efficiently. The ministers contributed to the common policy their own special experiences and views which under the all-embracing and masterly scheme of Sivajee could be integrated into the national policy. Not only the movement for Maratha independence but also the organisation of the state as it emerged out of the movement was closely modelled on the ideas and institutions with which the people were familiar. This only emphasises the popular and national character of the movement.

Ranade, along with several other writers, was able to trace a difference between this Cabinet or functional system of Sivajee's rule and the personal and confederate structure that evolved under the Peishwas. Ranade, however, did not feel that this latter scheme resulted from any miscalculation on the part of the Peishwas and their contemporary statesmen. Aurangzeb's invasion of the South and his fanatical policy did much

to unite and inspire the people of Maharashtra.⁴ In fact the spirit of resistance to external attack and of internal discipline in suffering was at its highest during the darkest days of Aurangzeb's invasion. But the capture and imprisonment of Shahu created a breach in the continuity of Maratha political and administrative evolution. Even after his restoration to the Satara gadi Shahu proved unequal to the task of leading the administration along old lines. In his own way Shahu was undoubtedly a noble and patriotic figure. But his were not the qualities that were characteristic of Sivajee. The formation and purposeful working of a cabinet council call for a power of leadership in the head of the state which Sivajee possessed in an exceptional measure, but which Shahu lacked. With no lead from the top the Council could not work.

Another very important influence worked against the possibility of continuing the old administrative practices. All the Peishwas were essentially expansionists. It is a fact of recorded history that the idea of an all-India Hindu domination was put into active operation by the Peishwas, and especially by Baji Rao the First. Now such a policy having been indicated by the contemporary circumstances prevalent in India the Peishwas as the chief ministers of the Maratha king had to take such steps as would protect and promote the Maratha interests against the other likely claimants for power in the rest of India. Personal and family squabbles apart, the Peishwas found that the new policy of an all-India expansion could not wait upon the support of the older families. As Sivajee in his day had to find support where he could get it, ignoring the opposition and apathy of the older families, the Peishwas also had to find instruments for their pan-Indian policy. While they were able to use a large part of the older leadership the task was steadily growing too stupendous for

4. If all these dangers were averted, and a new force communicated to the people, the credit of it must be ascribed to Aurangzeb's ambition. He stirred the people of Maharashtra to their inmost depths; and it was the hard discipline of this twenty years' war, which cemented the national and patriotic instincts of their leaders, and during the next three generations carried them as conquerors to the farthest part of India, (R. 194).

the limited resources of the traditional organisation.⁵ Hence new talent had to be discovered and encouraged. How successfully this was done is proved by later Maratha conquests and by the vestiges of these that are still to be found in all parts of India.

That the Peishwas tried to preserve the older forms of the Ministerial Council is well-known. It is equally clear that as a rule they did not interfere with the fields traditionally allotted to the respective ministers, though the freshness and utility of the old scheme had withered away with a change in personnel. In due course power concentrated in the hands of the Peishwas and his chief helpers who carried Maratha arms to success in different parts of India. At first the Peishwas made an attempt to keep their generals in far off lands in a regular chain of administrative authority welded round the central rule of the Maratha king administered through the Peishwas. But as a change in personnel had earlier weakened the leadership of the king at later stages the same cause undermined the control of the Peishwas. As the generals became more powerful, as they were able to establish their rule in distant lands on the strength of their own resources, and as a continued supply of able leadership at the centre could not be secured, the Maratha kingdom was imperceptibly transformed into a confederacy.⁶ The strength of the confederate bond

5. The Ashtapradhan Council was no doubt set up by Sivajee with great foresight, but it presupposed a well-ordered centralized Government. In the absence of such a Government, it could not be expected to work in accord with its old traditions, and Shahu had not the virtues of his grandfather, and did not inspire that confidence which was felt by all classes in the arrangements made by Sivajee. Moreover, the Council might work well for a small kingdom confined within narrow limits, but when, in consequence of the war, the Marathas spread over the whole country, from the Narmada to the Kaveri, and the leaders were holding possessions in detached places surrounded by the entire power of the Moghuls, these conditions for success were greatly wanting and the Ashtapradhan arrangement naturally broke down.—(R. 208-9).

6. The ascendancy of the Peshwas was like the ascendancy of the Prussian Monarchy in the German Empire. The Central Authority represented more the idea than the force of the Confederacy. While the old traditions lasted, it enabled the ministers at Raigad, Satara, Vishalgad, Jingsi, or Poona to carry on the government and direct the national force without the advantage always of having any strong personal ruler at the head. The Peshwa's Government under Nana Fadnavis was actually nicknamed in the courts at Hyderabad and Shrirangapatna as the Barabhai Government, or the Government of the Confederacy of Twelve Leaders. When the idea ceased to be respected, the Confederacy proved a source of weakness rather than strength.—(R. 13-14).

varied with the personal equation and with relative circumstances. But through the system of Chauth and Sardeshmukhi and through the insistence on recognition of succession to offices by the King on the advice of the Peishwa the forms of union were maintained.

Ranade could observe the personal as distinguished from the institutional element in these arrangements and he has commented on the instability induced by the change. He was, however, fully appreciative of the circumstances under which the change in the method of central administration was almost imperceptibly and unavoidably brought about. Institutional rule is ever a better guarantee of continuity and freedom than a personal one. But the traditions and talents of our people do not easily lend themselves to the success of institutional rule. The success of the cabinet system under Sivajee owed more to the strength of his personality than to the inherent suitability of the system. The shocks given to the Maratha state after his death had disorganised the normal working of the administration. Shahu on coming to the Gadi failed to restore the old model under his leadership. Hence a new organisation was evolved under a new leadership. Even this, the confederate principle, proved satisfactory so long as adequate leadership was forthcoming from the Peishwa's house. Ranade longed for a lasting change in our habits in this respect. The experience of Maratha history, under Sivajee as well as the Peishwas, showed our capacity for short intervals to rise above the principle of personal rule and to organise our collective life in institutions which could be satisfactorily worked under most trying circumstances. But the experiments were not uniformly successful and hence the need to emphasise the moral that unless we can rise above personal loyalty and live in a social world held together by institutional loyalties stable progress cannot be guaranteed.

Here was a paradox shown up by the history of Marathas and other Indian peoples which taxed a good deal the historical acumen and the constructive statesmanship of Ranade. The only thing that seems to have been long institutionalised in India is religion, but the normal interpretation of religious activity is so far removed from our every-day interests that its

influence can be rarely helpful in their promotion. In fact a narrow-minded interpretation of religious faith has often been known to frustrate rather than promote schemes of social consolidation and progress. The task of replacing the whole scheme of religious government of life by a purely secular principle is a very responsible and difficult one. Not only is the process bound to be slow but there is always a danger that what is destroyed is not adequately replaced. All the same the progress of knowledge and experience brings in its train a widespread enlightenment which is helpful to the building up of civic institutions. While this process is going on the outlook on religion might also be broadened so as to take in all the legitimate interests of organised human life. It was Ranade's faith based on a careful study of religion and history that religion at its widest ought to take in all the aspects of human welfare, as politics at its widest ought to refer to the culture as well as to the safety and prosperity of a people.

Fortunately in the history of Aryan religion itself could be found sufficient encouragement for the hope that a pure religion is not in conflict with pure business and pure politics. Perfection of humanity, development of all the faculties of men and full creative expression of the capacity for virtue in each man — these were the objective ends of all the three departments of life. Individual and collective life has to be so organised as to help forward the maximum possible realisation of these ends in each society. What attracted the reverent attention of Ranade in the writings and work of the Maharashtra saints, especially the more activist among them such as Ramadas, was their successful attempt at reinterpreting the best ideals of Aryan religion to suit the context of their own times. Ranade endeavoured to do the same in his own day. He had a hope that if a reformation of our religious beliefs and practices so as to make them conform to the ends of social welfare could be brought about not only would it contribute to the better spiritual but also to the better material welfare of the people.⁷ In his scheme based on a study of

7. This Religious Revival was the work also of the people, of the masses, and not of the classes. At its head were Saints and Prophets, Poets and Philosophers, who sprang chiefly from the lower orders of society—tailors, carpenters, potters, gardeners, barbers, and even mahars — more often than Brahmins.—(R. 10).

Indian history religious reform was an integral part of a scheme of national reconstruction. The attachment of people to the sanction and beneficence of religion has to be utilised for as wide a purpose as possible.

Ranade was able to read the trends of human evolution much more clearly than merely to suppose that this endeavour to reform religion could really meet all the requirements of the situation. For one thing it is in its immediate appeal contradicted by the more pressing pre-occupation of material life. Secondly the ever widening limits of the state make religion an insufficient basis for social organisation. In Government, as in industry, arts and literature our interests bring us into helpful contact with people who may not share our religious faith. If progress and creative freedom are the objects of our life these contacts ought not to be shunned. Even if we were ready to isolate ourselves world forces will not permit us to do so. Ultimately a social ethics in no way dependent on religion has to emerge. The needs of material welfare and the conditions of the moral betterment of the citizen are to be the objects of this new religion. Freedom in isolation or satisfaction with conformity to a traditional ritual are indicative of a comparatively less developed appreciation of the possibilities of human existence. No social system can be considered to be really beneficent which does not provide for the fullest and highest development of personality for all its members. Most of the social and administrative organisations which immediately preceded the advent of the British to this land were defective in these respects. To remedy these defects must be our first concern if we are to derive lessons from our past history for our future guidance.

A conscious, deliberate and planned effort to secure the maximum possible welfare for all members must be our object. To this end knowledge has to be gathered and industry organised. Ideas of right and wrong, desirable and undesirable ends, have to be constantly revised so as to be referable to this supreme criterion. A rational outlook on things, persons and institutions has to be popularised. Without changing the supreme objective of progress in co-operation with our fellowmen

beliefs, practices and institutions have to be adapted to suit the conditions of each time and place. Such an active, vigorous and creative outlook making for unity and strength once characterised our people; that was in the Vedic days. Both from our contemporary experience and our past heritage we have now to learn the civic virtue of knowledge. As Ranade said, "It will be well if all our writers and publicists would take that lesson to heart and profit by it."

CHAPTER XII

MESSAGE

The end is to renovate, to purify, and also to perfect the whole man by liberating his intellect, elevating his standard of duty, and perfecting all his powers. Till so renovated, purified and perfected, we can never hope to be what our ancestors once were the chosen people, to whom great tasks were—allotted and by whom great deeds were performed. (M. 179-80).

In the title and in several places in the body of the book we have described Ranade as the prophet of liberated India. Ranade had the vision to see India's life as a whole : the past producing the present and leading on to the future. He had an unerring instinct to see the possibilities of the situation for evil and for good. A deep study of our history and of the history of the other nations had filled him with a firm conviction that the future of India would be very bright. This was no wishful thinking nor a happy self-delusion. He had traced the special attributes of the Indian race as unfolding themselves through succeeding phases of the course of its history. The natural situation of the country, the mixture of races and the capacity for a healthy and progressive absorption of all that was beneficial in new cultures - these foundations of India's intellectual heritage substantiated his hopes. Without losing any of these desirable traits, he felt that the time had arrived to unburden us of some of the unhealthy features of our immediate past and to assimilate the good points of the new civilisation with which we had come into contact.

Ranade's message consists in an outline of these qualities which he wants us to develop and to express in our daily life. The end of all our venture is to be the development of the individual in respect of all his faculties for good. To supply to each individual an environment where his fullest freedom to develop would be assured is our main task. Freedom can hardly be used for a constructive and an expanding purpose unless the

welfare of physical life is secured as a means to the moral and cultural achievement of the race. This indeed is a human problem affecting the whole world. Every person and every nation has to meet the challenge of the situation as they are confronted with it, not forgetting its significance for the wider human struggle. Work for securing the widest possible freedom for all to develop their capacities for good was Ranade's message that he strove to impart through various channels. A life of constant striving to secure freedom and equality for all,—this would be a fitting description of Ranade's life and teachings. Gokhale, who knew Ranade's mind at least as well as any other person, felt the same way about the meaning and purpose of Ranade's life. In a well-considered declaration on this subject Gokhale gives in the following lines the message of Ranade, the purpose of his mission. With these words the book may fitly close.

“ The message of his life must be recognised by us, especially by the younger generations, as sacred and binding. The principles for which he laboured all his life—greater equality for all and a recognition of the essential dignity of man as man—are bound to triumph in the end, no matter how dark the outlook occasionally may be. But we can all of us strive to hasten that triumph, and herein lies the true dignity of our life: ‘**Work and sacrifice for the Motherland.**’ This is the message which Mr. Ranade has left us.”—(G. 784).

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